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The Proceedings  
OF THE  
Unitarian Historical Society

VOLUME I

PART I

How the Schism Came....

WILLIAM WALLACE FENN

Notes on Increase and Cotton Mather....

KENNETH B. MURDOCK

1925

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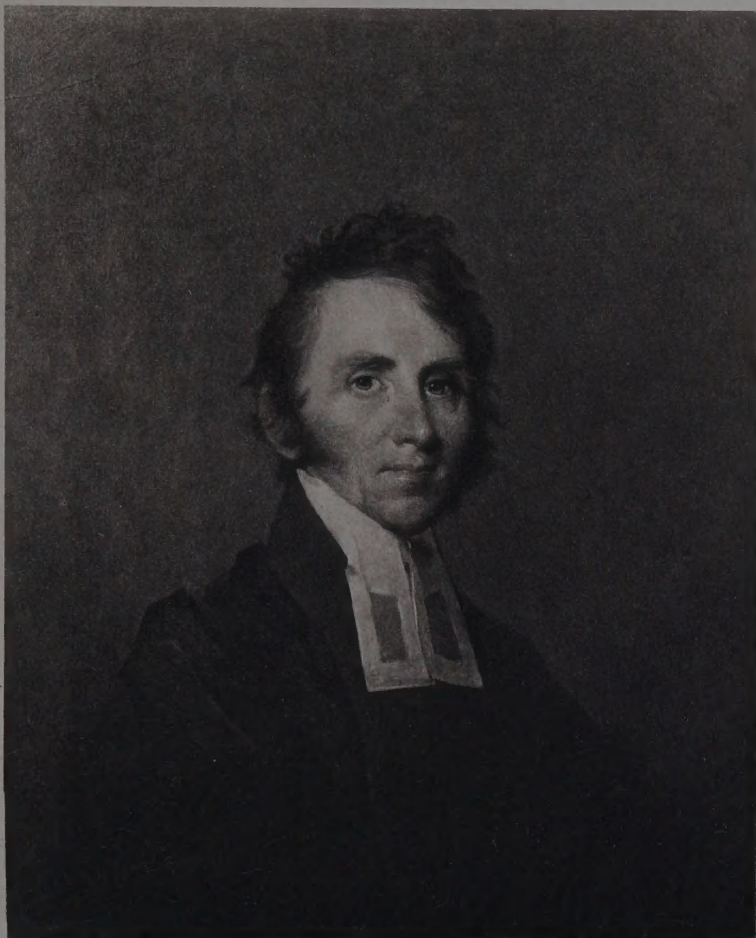
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THE PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
UNITARIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY





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*After a portrait by Gilbert Stuart  
in the possession of Mrs John A. Jeffries of Boston*





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The Proceedings

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OF THE

Unitarian Historical Society

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VOLUME I

PART I

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### EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Henry Wilder Foote                      Julius H. Tuttle  
Charles E. Park

*Communications to the Editors should be addressed to*

REVEREND HENRY WILDER FOOTE  
25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

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at once upon a wholly different mode of existence; the birth hour was a critical point in the continuity of growth. As the child's life goes on, a watchful parent often feels that its progress passes through fairly well marked stages. It is as if the child were climbing up a flight of stairs with high treads, instead of smoothly gliding up an unbroken inclined plane. Characteristics appear without warning, almost as if in its growth the child suddenly emerged upon new levels where hitherto unknown interests, capacities, and powers make their appearance without bell. It is so with an adolescent, and also with a mature man. We meet a friend with more or less regularity for many years, and detect little or no change in him, but how frequently it happens that we suddenly realize, with a shock of surprise, that he has grown perceptibly older since we saw him last. There are signs that he has turned a corner, or gone over a water-shed, that he has passed one of the critical points in the continuity of his life.

Manifestly the principle applies also to social developments. Undoubtedly, continuity is preserved, yet there are critical points at which the whole situation quickly and unmistakably changes. The comparatively even years between these critical points we designate as ages or periods, and attribute the transformation either to the influence of some outstanding man, who alters the direction of human thought or behavior, or to some social cataclysm like the Great War which carries tremendous consequences in its train. There is continuity of course, but there are also critical points. Nature pursues the even tenor of its way, yet there are, even now, earthquakes in New England and tornadoes in Illinois. Gunpowder has a way of going off with a bang and there are, still, explosions in social and individual history.

One such instance of a critical point in the continuity of the religious life of New England we are celebrating

this year. One who would understand the schism in the ancient Congregational order of Massachusetts by which Unitarians came into separate denominational existence must study a long process of gradual change, but he must also observe that there came critical points at which contingency seems to have entered into the situation and been responsible for a conspicuous and significant change in the course of events. Thus, very soon after 1630, the Calvinism of the first settlers began to soften and this process continued without marked interference for about a century. Time would fail us to trace this process or do more than merely suggest certain reasons for it. Among many causes—the Anne Hutchinson troubles, the Half-way Covenant, the influence of Harvard College and of English Latitudinarians like Tillotson—probably the most important was the change produced in the minds of the people by the success of their settlement here. When they were but a handful of men and women with a boisterous sea behind them, and a howling wilderness before them where savage beasts and still more savage men malignly tracked their timid wanderings, Calvinism was a perfectly natural and wholly congenial faith. They were, indeed, but a handful of settlers, yet they were confident that the hand that held them was the hand of Almighty God, out of which no powers of earth or hell could pluck them. Were they not in evident fact wholly dependent upon God? Upon whom could they rely save upon Him? But after they had discovered that there were no lions at Cape Ann, and that the savages could be intimidated, after they had cleared the wilderness and brought plenty into their well established homes, a feeling of self-reliance supplanted that of utter dependence upon God, and so their Calvinism weakened. They laid increasing weight upon human efficiency, leading towards Arminianism, and upon the usual church ordinances as means of grace, thus im-



plicitly denying the theory of regeneration by immediate divine operation. Almost imperceptibly their Calvinism was crumbling.

This might have continued without break or hindrance had it not been for one man, Jonathan Edwards. A thoroughly convinced Calvinist, whose theological doctrine was fundamentally confirmed by his precocious philosophizing, he was also a fearless and relentless preacher of terrific power. With the whole energy of his masterful being he set himself against the current tendency and sought to bring back into the religious life of New England, Calvinism with all, and even more than, its original vigor and rigor. And he succeeded, as a man is wont to succeed who with pitiless logic and winged words appeals to religious conservatism. His doctrine was recommended not only by its reliance upon certain selected portions of Scripture taken at their face value without gloss or twist, and the unflinching remorseless logic of his inferences, but also by the plea that it was the faith of the founders of New England by which the country had prospered and from which their degenerate descendants had departed to their loss and peril. Moreover, it fell in with the popular interest excited by the Great Awakening. Whitefield and his inferior imitators in New England were Calvinists, but they were appealing preachers and not convincing theologians. It was Edwards who supplied a theological structure for their emotional preaching. Not that his success was complete. At first, few of the ministers of the Standing Order were affected by his doctrine, but through his pupils and friends, men like Bellamy and Hopkins, the latter of whom gave his name to the new movement, his influence spread and by the end of the 18th century the Hopkinsian ministers and churches in New England perhaps equaled in number the "alleviated" or moderate Calvinists, and in addition there were many

scattered groups of come outers called "Separates" whose members were sympathetic with the preaching of the Revivalists and consequently with its implied theology which Edwards had made explicit. Yet there remained a large number of ministers and churches which held aloof from the New Lights and still continued in their tempered Calvinism.

There were, on the other hand, not a few ministers, especially in the Eastern part of Massachusetts, who having already got much farther away from the original Calvinism than most of their contemporaries, were carried still farther in the same direction by reaction against the excesses of the Hopkinsians. In a letter written by John Adams under date of May 15, 1815 to the Rev. Jedidiah Morse of Charlestown, the ex-President says: "Sixty-five years ago my own minister the Rev. Samuel Bryant, Dr. Jonathan Mayhew of the West Church in Boston, the Rev. Mr. Shute of Hingham, the Rev. John Brown of Cohasset, and perhaps equal to all if not above all, the Rev. Mr. Gay of Hingham, were Unitarians. Among the laity how many could I name, lawyers, physicians, tradesmen, farmers. More than fifty years ago I read Dr. Samuel Clark, Emlyn and Dr. Waterland. Do you think, my dear, Doctor, to teach me anything new in favor of Athanasianism?" As the quotation shows this Unitarianism was due chiefly to the English influence, not, however, of avowed Unitarians, but of Latitudinarians in the Anglican church. Although this influence was checked by the Revolution, the New England Liberals persevered in their way of thinking, and the tendency was aided, after the restoration of peace, by the writings of English Unitarians and the teaching of the French philosophers.

It would carry us far beyond the proper limits of this paper to discuss the influence of France upon the theo-

logical development of New England. Suffice it here to say that while immediately after the Revolution, there was a very friendly feeling towards France on account of her decisive assistance during the war, that feeling speedily waned on account of the Genet affair, French interference with our shipping, and particularly the horrors of the Days of Terror. The career of Dr. William Bentley of Salem illustrates the complicated situation. Writing to James Freeman of King's Chapel in 1788 he says: "You are acquainted with my avowed disbelief in the Trinity", and in his Diary under the date of May 18, 1792, he refers to "the abominable doctrine of the Trinity". Even so early as 1785 he had introduced Priestley's catechism into his church. He was therefore a thorough-going Liberal. Nevertheless the *Monthly Anthology* printed a scathing review of one of his printed sermons, and, so far as I have observed, never referred to him except in terms of disparagement. A partial explanation of this anomaly doubtless is that Bentley, like Mayhew of the generation before him and Theodore Parker of the generation after him, was an *enfant terrible* in the Liberal family, blurting out things which its other members studiously refrained from speaking. A deeper reason, however, is the contrast between his political attitude and theirs. They were Federalists and friendly towards England, while he was an ardent Republican who, after a brief period of hostility to France, turned into a violent enemy of England when she began to imperil the maritime interest of Salem by a series of acts which led up to the war of 1812. Accordingly Bentley was in decided disfavor with the Liberals, notwithstanding his theological principles.

I mention this merely in order to suggest the way in which politics and theology combined to create a rather more complicated situation than most historians of our religious development seem fully to realize. But the fact

is unmistakable that at the beginning of the 19th century there was a party in New England, particularly on the sea-board, which was very far removed from Calvinism. It has been suggested, and the local distribution of the party is in favor of the suggestion, that the broadening influence of commerce had much to do with this tendency. Evidently, then, these Liberals were too remote theologically to be touched by the influence of Edwards and the Hopkinsians. To them the issues which the Old Calvinists and the Hopkinsians were discussing were neither living nor momentous. It was a contrast between "farmer metaphysicians," (as the Hopkinsians were sometimes called) on the one hand, and more deeply read or widely traveled men with larger experience in human affairs, on the other. Moreover, the extravagancies of the Hopkinsians only confirmed their distrust and disgust. They abhorred revival measures, and the theology shocked their moral sense. They would have said to the Hopkinsians as Wesley is reported to have said to Whitefield: "Your God is my devil". For example: two arguments were used by the Hopkinsians which were irrefragable in logic but odious in morals. The first ran thus: The object of creation is to set forth the glory of God. His glory is his holy character. In his character is hatred of sin, which therefore must be manifest in creation. Consequently the purpose of creation would be defeated unless in the universe there were sin for God to hate and hell to show how much he hates it. But an objector would rejoin: Does not this, coupled with the doctrine of decrees, make God the author of sin? To which the Hopkinsian replied with cheerful and intrepid logic: Of course it does, and God must be the cause of sin: for if there were any evil in the cause of evil that would be part of the evil for which a cause is sought. Accordingly only absolute goodness can be the cause of evil. *Quod erat demonstrandum*. Now, I submit that it is ex-

ceedingly difficult to answer these vest-pocket arguments, and the Liberals refused to try their teeth upon such logical files; they simply turned away in abhorrence from so immoral an idea of God, and resolved that if that was consistent Calvinism they were content to be Christians, and Liberal Christians too.

So it came about that when the 19th century opened there were in the ancient Congregational order of Massachusetts three pretty distinct parties. To borrow political designations: there was the party of the Center, comprising the Old Calvinists, only slightly affected either by Edwards or by the Liberals, ministers and churches pursuing their hum-drum drowsy way of mitigated Calvinism, lethargic and unaggressive. On the Right were the Hopkinsians, vigorous and self-assertive, passionately argumentative and addicted to revival methods. On the Left were the Liberals, by far the smallest of the three groups, strong only within a short radius from Boston, peace-loving, prosperous, anxious to be let alone and willing to let everybody else alone theologically. These three parties were distinct although as yet undivided. If division should come it was by no means certain where the line, or lines, of separation would be drawn. There were plainly three possibilities. The three parties might fall apart into three denominations, or a line might run in such a way as to leave Old Calvinists and Liberals united against Hopkinsians, or it might run between Hopkinsians and Old Calvinists combined against the Liberals. In fact it looked as if the Old Calvinists were more likely to go with the Liberals than with the Hopkinsians, for the shading off through the Arminians was more gradual in the former direction than in the latter where the pitch was more abrupt theologically. Besides, Old Calvinists and Liberals were more in favor of the establishment than were the Hopkinsians, and, by and large, the political sympathies of the former



were with the Federalists while those of the latter were with the Republicans. As a matter of fact, however, when the schism came it left Old Calvinists and Hopkinsians together on one side of the line and the Liberals alone upon the other. What determined the actual cleavage?

As one reviews today the tragedy of the separation it gradually becomes clear to him, I think, that one man was more responsible than anybody else for its occurring where and as it did, and that man was Jedidiah Morse minister of the First Church in Charlestown. This Jedidiah Morse, father of the Morse of electric telegraph fame, was born in Woodstock, Connecticut, in 1761 and graduated from Yale in the class of 1783. In April, 1789, he became minister of the First Church in Charlestown, where he remained until February of 1820. His situation at Charlestown cannot have been altogether agreeable. Until his fellow-townsmen and classmate Abiel Holmes came to Cambridge in 1792, he, a Yale man, was surrounded by Harvard graduates, and his clerical position made him *ipso facto* a member of the Board of Harvard Overseers. Besides, while a man of alert and inquisitive mind, the Father of American Geography, he was very much of a busy-body, vain, quick to take offence, suspicious and resentful. In short, with all his intellectual ability, he was what we in New England call "pudgicky." If you ask what that word means, I answer, it means the sort of man that Jedidiah Morse was. Now as native of a small country town in Connecticut, a graduate of Yale, and pastor for a time of a church in Medway, Georgia, Morse had been unaffected by the liberal influence which was strong in Eastern Massachusetts, and soon after coming to Charlestown it was borne in upon him that his clerical colleagues were unsound in the faith and that he was called to become the champion of orthodoxy. Taking his turn in preaching the Great and Thursday Lecture in Boston

he delivered in January, July and December, 1790, three discourses upon the divinity of Christ. But he seems to have already conceived more practical measures to check and counteract the growing heresy. His biographer, Dr. William B. Sprague, says: "It cannot be doubted that Dr. Morse early formed the purpose of doing his utmost to effect an important change in the ecclesiastical condition of Massachusetts—first by separating the Unitarians from the Orthodox, and then by drawing the Orthodox of different shades into more intimate relations. Both these objects were ultimately effected, and more, probably, through the influence of Dr. Morse than that of any other man." \*

Dr. Sprague seems to me unquestionably correct in his statement of Morse's policy, and we must now see how that clever tactician accomplished his purpose. The Liberals unwittingly played into his hands by electing, in 1805, Henry Ware of Hingham as Hollis Professor of Divinity in Harvard College. This, the first endowed professorship in Harvard, established by Thomas Hollis of England in 1721, became vacant by the death of Professor Tappan in 1803. The two candidates were Jesse Appleton, afterwards President of Bowdoin College, and Henry Ware of Hingham, the former an Old Calvinist, the latter one of the acknowledged Liberals. No objection was made to Henry Ware on the ground of character or scholarship, but his opponents on the Corporation, led by Eliphalet Pearson, and on the Board of Overseers led by Jedidiah Morse, contended that the Orders, drawn up by Mr. Hollis and governing the appointment, required every incumbent to be a Calvinist; and a Calvinist, Henry Ware certainly was not. Of course, we cannot go into the controversy and discuss its merits; it is only necessary to say that the arguments of Pearson and Morse did not carry con-

\* *Life of Jedidiah Morse*, W. B. Sprague, p. 57.

viction and Henry Ware was elected by the Corporation (it is said by but a single vote), and confirmed by the Board of Overseers. The significance of this event was that by it a line was scored between the Liberals and the Old Calvinists, which was quite as much to Jedidiah Morse's purpose as if he had succeeded in defeating Henry Ware.

Disgruntled by the election of Henry Ware, and by his own failure to be elected President of the College, to which he had aspired after the death of Willard in 1804, Eliphalet Pearson resigned his professorship and retired to Andover where he had been Principal of the Academy before going to Cambridge. Convinced that Harvard could no longer be trusted to educate ministers except of the liberal type, and hence unacceptable to most of the churches in Massachusetts, he conceived the idea of having a theological seminary in Andover which should be Old Calvinist in character. The constitution of Phillips Academy had provided for the residence at the Academy of young men pursuing their studies for the ministry, and a few had availed themselves of this privilege. It was Dr. Pearson's plan to carry into effect, and extend, this original provision by securing proper accommodations and an endowed professorship for theological students, and through the interest and benevolence of the Phillipses and Deacon Abbot of Andover, this was accomplished. Here then was the beginning of a theological school in Andover which should be Old Calvinist in character and in which Dr. Pearson was to be professor. To guard against such perversion as they believed the Hollis gift had suffered at Harvard, the donors proposed that every professor in the School should subscribe to the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

Meanwhile, however, a similar project was on foot at Newbury. Certain wealthy men of Newburyport and Salem, influenced by Samuel Spring, minister of Newburyport, were ready to provide funds for a theological school

in Newbury of which Leonard Woods, then pastor of the local church, was to be professor. Two theological schools, then, were contemplated at the same time, in the same county of Essex, and within easy distance of each other. Why not combine the two undertakings and establish at Andover one strong commanding school of theology? That seemed an eminently sensible thing to do, yet there was a serious obstacle in the way. Those interested in the Newbury School were Hopkinsians, while, as has been said, those who were working at the Andover plan were Old Calvinists, and the two groups were at loggerheads theologically. Could this obstacle be overcome? Here again the ever busy Jedidiah Morse appears upon the scene, serving as a useful go-between. He had been associated with Eliphalet Pearson in opposition to Henry Ware, and he was even then negotiating with Spring and Woods for a union of the *Massachusetts Missionary Magazine*, an Hopkinsian periodical in which they were interested, with the *Panoplist* which he had started in the summer of 1805, and which was designed to serve as an organ of the two parties as against the Liberals. Woods, indeed, had been one of the contributors to the *Panoplist*. Even with Dr. Morse's energetic and ingenious activity, however, the negotiations between Andover and Newbury went on heavily and once and again seemed on the verge of a break-down. The Newbury group were suspicious of Andover, and were resolved to guard their gifts against any possible perversion by Old Calvinists as well by the Liberals. Finally, as a safeguard, an elaborate creed was drawn up, every word of which is said to have passed under the critical eye of Dr. Emmons, the foremost living theologian of the Hopkinsians, and a man of exceptional clearness of thought and precision of statement. The *Monthly Anthology* published an elaborate study of the Creed which aimed to prove that it was a thoroughly Hopkinsian document on

every point where Hopkinsians differed from Old Calvinists, and its contention seems to be well-founded; the Old Calvinists had no man in New England at all comparable in acumen to Nathanael Emmons. It was required that every Professor on the Newbury foundations, and this was promptly extended to those of Andover also, should subscribe to this Creed at his inauguration, and lest he should learn something afterwards in the course of his professional studies, regularly every five years thereafter. To make assurance doubly sure, a Board of Visitors was established, the members of which also were required to assent to the Creed, whose duty was to see that the foregoing provisions were enforced. With these elaborate precautions, the union was finally made and Andover Theological Seminary opened its doors in the Autumn of 1808. The chief significance of this event was that, in connection with the incorporation of the *Massachusetts Missionary Magazine* into the *Panoplist* which occurred in the same year, it signalized a union of Calvinists and Hopkinsians against the Liberals, the project dearest to Dr. Morse's heart. Now it was clear where the cleavage would be, for the line scored by the choice of Henry Ware had broadened and deepened into an unmistakable crack.

So far, however, there had been no formal split such as Dr. Morse had early determined to effect. To this end, therefore, he now directed his resourceful mind and restless energy. It was hoped to accomplish this part of his plan by the formation of Associations among ministers, membership in which was conditional upon acceptance of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, and of Consociations among the churches, like those with which Dr. Morse was familiar in Connecticut. Behind these projects was a purpose to bring the Congregational churches of the Orthodox brand in New England into some sort of affilia-



tion with the national Presbyterian churches. At this point, however, the opponents of the Liberals had over-shot their mark. Associations were formed from which the Liberal men were excluded, but when it came to Con-sociations, Morse and his friends had reckoned ill with the deeply-seated Congregationalism of Massachusetts. No man in all New England was more stoutly opposed to Liberalism than the aforesaid Dr. Emmons of Franklin, but none was more unreservedly devoted to Congrega-tionalism than he. One of his pithy sayings is often quoted "Associationism leads to Consociationism, Consociationism leads to Presbyterianism, Presbyterianism leads to Epis-copacy, Episcopacy leads to Roman Catholicism, and Ro-man Catholicism is an ultimate fact." This attempt on the part of Dr. Morse was baulked, for it became evident that he could not effect separation by this means without alienating many of those whom he had just succeeded in uniting, and in 1816 the plan was quietly shelved.

But Dr. Morse was not a man to be easily discouraged. Besides, to his doubtless sincere opposition to heresy there had by this time been added an element of personal rancor and resentment. This introduces us to a phase of the controversy which seems to have had more importance than is usually ascribed to it. There is a mean saying—*Cherchez la femme*—the implication of which is that when mischief is brewing some woman is tending the fire and stirring the pot. So it was with this theological contro-versy of a century ago. Pray disabuse your minds at once of any fear, or hope, that I am about to hand out a bit of back-stairs scandal. By no means; the woman in this case was Hannah Adams, an aged and irreproachable vestal, unprepossessing and half blind, who was laboriously trying to earn a living by her pen, and the quarrel with Dr. Morse of which she became the occasion was about purely literary matters.

I have spoken of Dr. Morse as the Father of American Geography—a phrase borrowed from the epitaph on his monument in New Haven. In the autumn of 1793 Rev. James Freeman of King's Chapel issued a pamphlet drastically reviewing the latest edition of Morse's *American Geography*. Dr. Jenks of Boston is quoted by Morse's biographer to the effect that the severity of the criticism was due "in part at least to the odium theologicum of that contentious period". This may be doubted, but Dr. Morse did not doubt it, and the offence rankled. His pamphlet on "*The True Reasons on which the Election of a Hollis Professor of Divinity in Harvard College was opposed*", which appeared in 1805, provoked severe animadversions from the Liberals. Bentley quoted Dr. Waterhouse of Cambridge as thinking that "Dr. Morse's conduct in the election of a Professor of Divinity in Cambridge, and his zeal to patronize the institution at Andover, has cost him the favor of the clergy who, to use the Doctor's own words, spare no opportunity to bespatter him." This is valuable testimony to Dr. Morse's state of mind at the time when the Hannah Adams controversy broke out.

In 1799 this estimable bluestocking spinster had published a *Summary History of New England*. While this book still held the market, Dr. Morse, collaborating with the Rev. Elijah Parish, issued a "*Compendious History of New England*." Soon rumors began to circulate that Dr. Morse had made improper use of Miss Adams' book, plagiarized it in fact, and also that he had wronged a needy author, a woman, too, and of poor eye-sight besides, by forestalling the market for her proposed Abridgement. We need not follow the details of the controversy or even the verdict of the informal jury to whom the matter was ultimately referred. The point is that Dr. Morse believed that the whole business was an attempt to get back at him for his opposition to Henry Ware and to the Liberals

in general. It made his view more plausible that Hannah Adams was one of the Liberals herself and not only had been befriended by them but is also said to have done most of her literary work in Dr. Buckminster's study. Whether justly or not, Dr. Morse believed himself the victim of persecution by the Liberals who were engaged in an "Indian warfare" against him, and, being the sort of man he was, it added to the acrimony of the controversy. He was waiting for an opportunity to pay the Liberals back in their own coin, and his chance soon came.

In 1812, an English Unitarian, Belsham, published a life of Theophilus Lindsey, the leading Unitarian clergyman in England, in which were letters from American correspondents, several of whom were connected with King's Chapel, in which the progress of liberal sentiments here was called a progress of Unitarianism. On account of the war which was then on between this country and England it was some time before this book reached Boston; but when it came Dr. Morse seized his opportunity. In 1815 he published a pamphlet entitled "*American Unitarianism*" in which the letters referred to were reprinted, and it was exultingly proclaimed that now at last the mask was off and these New England Liberals were seen for what they really were—Unitarians and nothing else. They had hitherto sought to disguise their true sentiments, they had denied that they were Unitarians, arrogating to themselves the name of Liberal Christians, but now they were condemned out of their own mouths. Morse was quite correct in saying that the Liberals in general had not called themselves Unitarians, and this for the very good reason that they were not Unitarians as that term was then understood in England and wherever Priestley was known. They were anti-Trinitarians, to be sure, but they did not preach against the doctrine of the Trinity, because they deemed it of minor importance and

also because they earnestly and sincerely wished to avoid schism in the old Congregational order. Others might believe the doctrine and preach it as much as they pleased—that was no concern of theirs—only they did not believe it and so of course would not preach it. Furthermore, at that time the name Unitarian generally connoted Materialism as a philosophy, Necessitarianism in morals, Socinianism in theology, as well as sympathy with France and the French Revolution—some or all of these things. Materialists, the New England Liberals certainly were not; they could not sympathize with Necessitarianism for it was precisely from Calvinism that they had revolted; and as respects the person of Christ, Channing's statement is demonstrably correct that among them there was great diversity of opinion—a few were Socinians, but for the most part, the Liberals were Arians, and high Arians at that, holding that Jesus was a divine pre-existent being especially commissioned by God to convey to the world a final and authoritative revelation of himself amply attested by miracle and prophecy and recorded in the New Testament. Finally, so far as sympathy with the French Revolution was concerned, who could be more opposed to it, root and branch, than the conservative Federalists who made up the bulk of the Liberal party in theology? There was then a perfectly proper reason why they had not called themselves by this party name. In fact, as Channing testified, they were distinguished by nothing more than by unwillingness to be a party, they wished no human leaders, they would avow no human creeds, insisting that declarations of belief should be couched only in the very words of the Scriptures of revelation.

Of course Dr. Morse expected that his pamphlet would make trouble and his expectations were fully justified. Channing was aroused by the charges of dishonorable equivocation; he and others deeply resented also the at-

tempts to check the freedom of theological inquiry and squeeze out the Liberals. To tie an institution of learning up to a creed from which it could never cut loose seemed to them monstrous; to introduce associations and consociations was not to be endured. So a vigorous controversy started, which, however, soon passed over into a serious discussion upon the theological points at issue. But now the lines were sharply drawn. Conservative ministers refused to exchange with liberal, conservative church members seceded from parishes which called a liberal minister, and the amenities went flying.

Unfortunately it was in connection with the point last mentioned that a legal dispute arose, the settlement of which embittered the controversy to a quite extraordinary degree. In brief the question was this: suppose that a majority of the church members—that is, the communicants—secedes from the parish or society—that is, the secular organization responsible for finances—does the withdrawing, or the remaining, group constitute the church of that particular parish? This might seem purely an academic question, but unhappily property rights were involved. For in many instances tangible property, the communion plate, endowments, as well as the meeting house itself, were held in trust by the Deacons of that particular church. If the deacons seceded with the church did they carry with them these trusts, or did they belong to the deacons who remained, or who were afterwards appointed by the church members who did not secede? As involving property rights, the case came before the courts, and in the famous Dedham case of 1820, the Supreme Court of Massachusetts decided that the church of a given parish or society must be identified by its connection with that parish or society. Even if a majority of the church members withdrew, those who remained constituted the church in that parish and their deacons



were the lawful custodians of property belonging to the church. This decision bore very heavily upon the Conservatives, who felt deeply injured—some even going to the point of charging that the decision was due to the denominational preferences of the judges, an insinuation against the Supreme Bench of Massachusetts which its record and reputation make supremely ridiculous. But the Conservatives were right in declaring that the result was inequitable, for so it was. That it was good law does not prove that it was just. We to-day ask why there should not have been a proportional distribution of the property between those who went and those who stayed. That would have been just and right, but, after the case had come into the courts and the courts had decided who were the legal custodians of trust funds, the party so designated could not lawfully have turned over those trust funds or any part of them to any other persons or organization whatsoever. It was a tragedy that an appeal was made to Caesar at all, but, the appeal once made and the case heard, Caesar's verdict stood. It is not surprising, however, that this decision greatly embittered the controversy. When a root of bitterness springs up in religious soil, wormwood is honey compared with the fruit thereof. Henceforth the two parties must go their several ways without hope of reconciliation—at least for a century. With the founding of the American Unitarian Association in 1825, which by the way, was strenuously opposed by many of the older Liberal ministers and less than half-heartedly favored by Channing himself, who was by no means of a denominational spirit and temper, the separation was finally accomplished, and since that time the two divisions of the ancient Congregational order have been separate and distinct features in the ecclesiastical landscape of New England. And so the schism came.

## Notes on Increase and Cotton Mather\*

By KENNETH B. MURDOCK

*Assistant Professor of English in Harvard University*

Advocates of liberality in religion should find much to cheer them at this meeting. Here am I, an Episcopalian, an officer of a non-sectarian university, talking to a Unitarian Historical Society about two Congregationalists! I have an idea that those two Congregationalists, were they alive today, would be the first to approve of this meeting. Both Increase Mather and Cotton Mather, earnest divines and staunch Congregationalists as they were, kept abreast of the most advanced thought of their times, and I can not imagine that they could live today without becoming in our age as they were in their own, advocates of enlightened and liberal doctrine.

Neither Increase nor Cotton Mather needs any introduction to this audience. Their service of the Second Church has been proudly recorded by Dr. Robbins and others, and he has defended them against more than one of the charges popularly brought against them. In his pages you find them as they were, sincere, earnest men; men of great power in the pulpit; men of untiring energy in their devotion to the Church, and men whose ideals were those which we look for in spiritual and intellectual leaders.

It would be temerity in me to attempt to cover once more the ground Dr. Robbins has covered. It would be futile to attempt to sketch with any degree of completeness in the time allowed me, the career of either of the

\* This paper was read to the Unitarian Historical Society on May 22, 1924. Much of the material has since appeared in *Selections from Cotton Mather*, edited by Dr. Murdock, published by Harcourt, Brace & Co., and in Dr. Murdock's *Increase Mather*, published by The Harvard University Press. Ed.

great Mathers. But there are, fortunately, some bits of evidence bearing on their lives and characters, which have become known since Dr. Robbins wrote, and there are some elements in both men which have not been sufficiently emphasized by their biographers. The random jottings which make the material for what I have to say today have been collected in the hope that they may shed light on important and forgotten aspects of the great ministers of the old Second Church, or may add something to the picture of them presented by the historians.

Cotton Mather was the son of Increase, but in violation of chronology I speak of him first. He is better known today than any other American Puritan, partly because of the somewhat unlovely characteristics bestowed upon him by certain writers, partly because his books were brilliant enough and individual enough to win attention from posterity, and partly because he has been fortunate in serving as a subject for an expert and sympathetic biographer. Barrett Wendell's biography of Cotton Mather gives not only the chronicle of his life but also a picture of the man, and one need not go beyond its pages to answer the question as to why the younger Mather made himself so much of a human force in his day.

Unfortunately Mr. Wendell's biography is less read than the statements of certain other historians, and too many readers have been taught to see in Cotton Mather only an epitome of Puritan shortcomings. Impartial investigation has, I think, demonstrated long ago that most of the failings for which he is held up to blame or ridicule are falsely attributed to him. Before this audience it is not necessary to remark that he was not a malicious fomenter of superstitious beliefs as to witchcraft nor a cruel persecutor of supposed witches. It is not necessary to defend him here against the charge of being a sixteenth century mind left behind by the march of progress. We must admit

certain faults in him,—vanity, a tendency toward pedantry, overhastiness of speech toward his foes, and a too great inclination to think of himself as an intellectual dictator for his time. But I prefer to speak of his virtues, and since to enumerate them would, I feel sure, be a longer task than to list his deficiencies, I limit what I have to say to a few comments on but one of his four hundred books, which reveals more perfectly than any other with which I am familiar some elements in his position as a man of letters and a side of his philosophy too little remembered to-day. This book is his *The Christian Philosopher*, published in London in 1721.

Some critics have long maintained that Cotton Mather had distinct ability as a writer. Barrett Wendell's fine taste saw the excellence of the style of the *Magnalia*, and he declared that the merit of the book disposed him "to rate it among the great works of English literature in the seventeenth century". He adds, "Whatever else Cotton Mather may have been, the *Magnalia* alone, I think, proves him to have been a notable man of letters". Such praise, from a critic so well versed in the best of the world's literature, outweighs many hastily uttered verdicts from men less qualified to judge. Of course, neither Mr. Wendell nor anyone else could overlook Mather's literary vices, his too great use of fantastic conceits, what Daniel Neal called in 1718 the "puns and jingles that attend all his writings,"<sup>1</sup> his excesses in the use of quotations and allusions, and the marks of haste reasonably to be expected and often to be found in the work of this amazingly prolific penman. But admitting all this, Cotton Mather, to whom "the Blades that set up for Criticks" appeared "for the most part as Contemptible, as they are a Supercilious Generation"<sup>2</sup> could and did write more

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Sibley's *Harvard Graduates*, iii, 32.

<sup>2</sup> C. Mather, *Manuductio ad Ministerium*, (1726), 45.

than one page appealing to anyone with an ear for prose style. They may not be pages of the sort that we should wish to write, but they have always the stamp of individuality and often reveal in some degree the high imagination of the artist. Several such pages are to be found in the *Christian Philosopher*, and it is to them that I wish now to turn.

The point of view from which Mather wrote this volume, is interesting, and, I venture to believe, significant. Again and again in this little book, half scientific treatise, half religious plea, he dilates on the beauty of nature. This is a theme familiar in our literature. Crèvecoeur, Bryant, Emerson, Thoreau, and many followers, have sought fitting words in which to express the glory and meaning of the natural world. But such expressions are not common until the late eighteenth century, and, except in a page or two in Anne Bradstreet, it is not easy to find an American author earlier than Mather giving much attention to the beauty of his environment. But the *Christian Philosopher* shows again and again not only that Mather saw the wonders of nature with the observant eye of the scientist, but also that his feeling for them was akin to the poet's. Of the moon he writes, "*My God, I bless thee for that Luminary, by which we have the uncomfortable Darkness of our Night so much abated! That Luminary, the Influences whereof have such a part in the Flux and Reflux of our Seas; without which we should be very miserable! That Luminary, whose Influences are so sensibly felt in the Growth of our Vegetables, and our Animals.*"<sup>1</sup> Prosaic enough, perhaps, and certainly far removed from Henry Thoreau's passionate outburst of vague adoration of the same "Luminary". But the next line, referring to what has gone before, reads, "These are some of the *Songs, which GOD, the Maker of us both, has*

<sup>1</sup> P. 51.



given me in the Night." Mather's praise of God, as revealed in the moon is, then, "a song" given him "in the night," a product of inspiration, of the mystic feeling that makes poets. Remember Thoreau once more and his laconic "Dreamed of purity last night."

Or, again, we find Mather writing of fire, an element which always fascinated him and about which he wrote a work of theological instruction—"This one Object, the *Fire on the Hearth*, will afford a whole *Book-full* of profitable Contemplations" <sup>1</sup>. He walks in his garden and sets down in his diary, "The Time of the year arrives for the glories of Nature to appear in my Garden. I will take my Walks there, on purpose to read the Glories of my SAVIOUR in them." <sup>2</sup> In the *Christian Philosopher* he adds, "How agreeable the *Shade of Plants*, let every Man say that *sits under his own Vine, and under his own Fig-tree!*" or, "How charming the Proportion and Pulchritude of the *Leaves, the Flowers, the Fruits*, he who confesses not, must be, as Dr. More says, *one sunk into a forlorn pitch of Degeneracy, and stupid as a Beast.*" <sup>3</sup>

I like best to think of Cotton Mather seated under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree, his cares and quarrels for the moment forgotten, delighting in what he called, in what seems to me a splendid phrase, "the Gaiety and Fragrancy" of flowers. <sup>4</sup> He said that many a man feared to learn Hebrew, lest he should be suspected of being "an Odd starv'd, Lank sort of a thing, who had lived only on *Hebrew Roots* all his Days." <sup>5</sup> Such suspicions as to scholars persist today. To some of my generation Mather himself, man of learning that he was, seems deserving of the charge of being just such a person as Hebrew scholars were said to be in his own day. But it seems

<sup>1</sup> P. 47.

<sup>2</sup> 7 Mass. Historical Society Collections, vii, 619-620.

<sup>3</sup> P. 126.

<sup>4</sup> *Christian Philosopher*, 127.

<sup>5</sup> *Manuductio*, 30.

to me that the *Christian Philosopher* with its delight in the stars, the moon, the elements, the wonder and glory of nature, is sufficient antidote, and that the man who took his walks in his garden delighting in the beauty he found there can by no means have been merely "an odd, starved, lank sort of a thing." No, given a different age in which to live, transferred to some clime where one might more safely exult over things of this world, the Cotton Mather revealed in the *Christian Philosopher* might have turned his emotion into prose and verse gladly to be read as expressing for all men the joy a philosopher, a mystic, and a poet has in communion with the growth and life and beauty of this sphere.

Perhaps the few sentences I have quoted do not justify such a belief. But there is one passage which I hope will make my feeling clear.

"The Anatomy of Plants, as it has been exhibited by the incomparable Curiosity of Dr. Grew, what a vast *Field of Wonders*, does it lead us into!

The most inimitable *Structure* of the Parts!

The particular *Canals*, and most adapted ones, for the conveyance of the lymphatick and essential Juices!

The *Air-Vessels* in all their curious Coylings!

The *Coverings* which befriend them, a Work unspeakably more curious in reality than in appearance!

The strange Texture of the *Leaves*, the angular or circular, but always most orderly Position of their *Fibres*; the various *Foldings* with a *Duplication*, a *Multiplication*, the *Fore-rowl*, the *Back-rowl*, the *Tre-rowl*; the noble Guard of the *Films* interposed!

The *Flowers*, their Gaiety and Fragrancy; the *Perianthium* or *Empalement* of them; their curious Foldings in the *Calyx* before their Expansion, with a *close Couch* or a *concave Couch*, a *single Plait* or a *double Plait*, or a *Plait* and *Couch* together, or a *Rowl*, or a *Spire*,

or *Plait* and *Spire* together; and their luxuriant Colours after their *Foliation*, and the expanding of their *Petala!*"<sup>1</sup>

As I read this, I feel that it is something more than a list of scientific data. Am I wrong in believing that it must have been written with an interest in form, an ear for cadence and the sound of the individual word, and that the printing of most of the sentences and phrases as separate paragraphs bespeaks a writer concerned with the artistic effect of his lines?

Think of Walt Whitman and remember how many of his poems made use of the method which Mather chose. To observe, to enumerate one's observations in long lines, without meter but with a certain cadence and a very precise care for the building up of a structural effect in a long passage,—these things were essential in Whitman. Do I err in seeing them displayed also in what I have quoted from the *Christian Philosopher*? Whitman once wrote:

"O the cotton plant! The growing fields of rice, sugar, hemp! The cactus, guarded with thorns—the laurel-tree with large white flowers,

The range afar—the richness and barrenness, the old woods charged with mistletoe and trailing moss,

The piney odor and the gloom, the awful natural stillness, (here in these dense swamps the freebooter carries his gun, and the fugitive has his conceal'd hut:)

O the strange fascination of these half-known, half impassable swamps, infested by reptiles, resounding with the bellow of the alligator, the sad noises of the night-owl and the wild-cat, and the whirr of the rattlesnake."<sup>2</sup>

In this we have, I think, use of the same means as in my quotation from Mather.

Now Whitman was, in intention at least, a poet, and one cannot deny, I think, that he was an artist in that he clothed

<sup>1</sup> P. 127.

<sup>2</sup> From *O Magnet-South*.

his ideas in a definite form, phrased with constant sensitiveness to rhythm and cadence, and constructed his work on definite principles chosen because they were those by which his emotion could be most perfectly expressed. He called the result poetry; Mather was content that his "songs given in the night" should pass as prose, but both men desired to find artistic means of revealing their emotions, and they hit upon similar methods. Cotton Mather conceived of the "Anatomy of Plants" as a living testimony to the greatness of God, and his adoration for God was too great for ordinary prose. To utter it he sought, consciously or unconsciously, a special form, and he strove to make words carefully chosen for their sound, sentences predominately rhythmical, and a carefully patterned structure, aid in conveying his emotion. He had not the skill displayed in the best of Whitman, but he exhibited a no less heartfelt artistic purpose, and, under the stress of deep spiritual excitement, achieved a style by no means unlike that adopted by a nineteenth century American hailed as an original literary genius. I have no wish to draw a detailed parallel between Whitman and Mather, or to suggest that one was influenced by the other, but I hope that I have made apparent why it seems to me that Cotton Mather may be justly called not merely a voluminous compiler and hasty writer of tracts for the times, but also, in intention and aspiration, at least, a literary artist. His form may have been wisely or unwisely chosen, the result may be good or bad, but the *Christian Philosopher* shows him to have been a man quite as much interested in skilful technique, in the power of language and style, as in scholarship or theology. His day was not one in which most Bostonians discussed seriously or generally the technical side of prose or poetry, and that he showed himself to be deeply concerned with such matters proves, just as many pages of the *Magnalia* prove, that he was in truth "a notable man of letters."

Such points, perhaps, are interesting only to students of literature, but none of us today can be blind to the importance of a second element in Mather, revealed also in his *Christian Philosopher*. This is his attitude toward the relation between science and religion.

In 1894 Andrew Dickson White wrote: "My belief is that in the field left to them—their proper field—the clergy will more and more, as they cease to struggle against scientific methods and conclusions, do work even nobler and more beautiful than anything they have heretofore done. . . . . My conviction is that Science, though it has evidently conquered Dogmatic Theology based on biblical texts and ancient modes of thought, will go hand in hand with Religion; and that Religion, as seen in the recognition of 'a Power in the universe, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness,' and in the love of God and of our neighbor, will steadily grow stronger and stronger. . . . ." These words were written as a preface to a great history of the age-old "warfare between science and religion." In writing them, Mr. White, it will be noticed, felt it necessary to date the ending of the warfare in the future, and some elements in the religious controversies of today suggest that the peace is still to make. In the light of all this, the fact that Cotton Mather, more than two centuries ago, one hundred and seventy three years before Mr. White wrote his preface, tried to show that religion and science should be friends, not foes, is a striking testimony to his liberality and intellectual enlightenment. As he put it, in beginning his *Christian Philosopher*, "The ESSAYS now before us will demonstrate, that *Philosophy* is no *Enemy*, but a mighty and wondrous *Incentive* to *Religion*."<sup>1</sup> This savors of the twentieth century quite as much as of the seventeenth. It is akin in spirit to a saying of a later minister of the Second Church, Ralph

<sup>1</sup>P. 1.

Waldo Emerson, "The Religion that is afraid of science dishonours God and commits suicide." And it is the best of evidence that Cotton Mather was a man of breadth, vision, and independence.

That he was something more than a mere dabbler in science, everyone knows. We remember that he was elected to the Royal Society. We respect his heroism in the fight to introduce inoculation for smallpox, a fight in which he braved the opposition of an excited populace, combatted the arguments of physicians, and did not flinch even when his opponents called him a foe to religion and to God. But even though we have these things in mind, the *Christian Philosopher*, I think, still has the power to interest us, revealing as it does the breadth of Mather's learning, the scientific quality of his method, and his acquaintance with some of the best and newest books on natural philosophy.

The *Christian Philosopher*, then is a book with many claims to our attention. It exhibits Cotton Mather's scientific zeal and learning, it displays his too often forgotten enthusiasm for writing as a fine art, it shows him to have been a man who rejoiced in the beauty of the world with the emotions of a poet, and it makes abundantly clear that he was no mere antiquarian but one whose foresight and liberality were equal to what was then the radical step of attempting to bridge the chasm between the theologian and the scientist. Yet, curiously enough, the book has been largely forgotten—too largely forgotten, surely, in a day when experimentation in the border land between poetry and prose is much in vogue, when we welcome each new effort to find an artistic form capable of expressing man's feeling toward nature, when we exalt the study of science, and when the very question Mather set himself to answer still remains a much debated problem.

An American university has recently offered a prize of six thousand dollars "for the best book on the connec-



tion, relation and mutual bearing of any practical science .....with and upon the Christian religion." If Cotton Mather were alive today, who more likely than he to impress the judges by his words on such a subject? How much would his *Christian Philosopher* have to fear in competition with more modern discussions of the same theme?

Cotton Mather himself said: "After all, Every Man will have his own *Style*, which will distinguish him as much as his *Gate* [gait]." <sup>1</sup> Certainly this was true of him, and it is because the *Christian Philosopher* reveals so well certain individual elements in Mather's style and in his temperament, that I have ventured to speak thus at length about it. I know of no better introduction to Mather the scientist, Mather the artist, Mather the lover of beauty and the liberal-minded philosopher. Properly read, I think, it brings one into contact not with a hidebound theologian but an intellectual pioneer; a man who was no mere Hebrew scholar but a scientist, and one who should live not simply as the dour Puritan of tradition but as an open-eyed man of the world, a lover of trees, flowers, books, gardens, and of life itself. Surely Mather is one who, to quote Professor Riley, "would have agreed with Emerson when he said, 'Come into the azure and love the day.' " <sup>2</sup>

The fact that Cotton Mather was an extraordinary man has led some unwary students into the belief that Increase Mather was chiefly distinguished by having been his father. Others have fallen into the even more dangerous error of believing that the two Mathers were alike in everything, and so to be praised or condemned in one breath. Nothing is farther from the truth. They did share many interests; they labored together at the Second Church; each was marked in his generation by an advanced attitude toward science, but in temperament and character—even

<sup>1</sup> *Manuductio*, 46.

<sup>2</sup> I. W. Riley, *American Philosophy* (1908), 199.

in literary style—they were quite unlike. Nor can we escape the conclusion, however much we admire Cotton Mather, that his father was the greater man, measured by his service to his church and country. If he lacked his son's brilliance and eccentricity, he possessed more universally useful qualities and used them so well as to influence profoundly the spiritual, political, and intellectual development of New England. It was he, not his son, who became, in Barrett Wendell's words, "the greatest of the native Puritans."

His career is familiar to you, and only its briefest outline need be given here. He was born in Dorchester in 1639, graduated from Harvard in 1656, took his master's degree at Trinity College, Dublin, in 1659, preached in Devonshire, in Guernsey, and at Gloucester, England, returned to Boston after the Restoration, and became Teacher of the Second Church on May 27, 1664. There he served until his death, a period of fifty-nine years. He was for a time one of the Licensers of the Press, and for nearly twenty years President of Harvard College, the first native-born American to hold that office. From 1688 to 1692 he was in England, representing the colony's interests at the courts of James II and William III, winning from them a new charter by which Massachusetts was governed for nearly a century. By 1692 he was the unquestioned leader of the American Congregational Church; his diplomatic achievements were unrivalled among his countrymen; he had already shown that Harvard was to develop under his care, and he had written and published some fifty books.

Inevitably, of course, he had political enemies, men who differed from him as to the wisdom of the administrative system provided for by the new charter he had brought from London. Their efforts, and the animosity of certain Bostonians who opposed his views on minor

points of church discipline, compassed his forced resignation from the presidency of Harvard in 1701. It is the fashion to call those Congregationalists who worked against him liberals, but analysis of their tenets shows that they were no more liberal than he, and that their ideal was change, not progress. He yielded the President's chair to Willard, a man no less orthodox, sharing Mather's views on witchcraft, and quite as determined to keep Harvard sectarian in accordance with the wishes of most of its alumni, its founders, and its benefactors. Nor should we forget that, had Mather been willing to sacrifice his pride, he need not have given up his office in Cambridge. He believed his work in his church and as a writer far transcended in importance anything he could accomplish at Harvard, and no attack upon him ever undermined seriously his influence in the pulpit or among readers of current books. Till his death he kept his place as the most widely known and respected of New England divines. He died in Boston in 1723, and it is pleasant to recall that in his last years, however worried he was by the relaxing of old Puritan standards, he never gave up his work, and, even in his last months, never blinded himself to the progress of the world. There are few more impressive episodes in his life than his eager coming to the aid of his son in advocating the unpopular cause of inoculation. More than eighty years old, and very feeble, he could not desert what he believed to be the right, and his interest in scientific advance was no less marked in 1721 than it had been in 1684 when he discussed the most recent astronomical discoveries.

Obviously a career so rich cannot be adequately discussed in such a talk as this. But I shall venture to offer you a few notes upon it, giving as my defense the fact that any man whose life has become a chapter in history is in grave danger of appearing to modern readers as a

mere abstract personification of this or that virtue, of ability, of achievement, or of failure. Now I am sure that, whatever Increase Mather may have been, he was flesh and blood, and that it was his humanity, the strength of his personality, his direct day to day influence upon men of all classes, which made the foundation of his greatness. And, I think, there is no better way to discover at a distance of two centuries such essential elements in a man's character than to look at the books he read and the friends he made.<sup>1</sup>

It is the less necessary to say much about Mather's books, because, by the good offices of Mr. Julius H. Tuttle, it has been made possible for students to gain an adequate knowledge of his library.<sup>2</sup> There are, however, one or two points worth noting particularly. Theology, of course, filled most of Mather's shelves, as was inevitable for a man so wedded to his profession, but there was a volume of Andrew Marvell, one of Donne, George Herbert's poems, and the immortal *Worthies* of Thomas Fuller. Sir Walter Raleigh's *Prerogative of Parliaments*, a book regarded as advanced in its theories when it was published, the works of certain Jesuits, and Jeremy Taylor's *Liberty of Prophesying*, which has been called the statement of the principles of toleration most fruitful in its effect upon the English mind, all testify that Mather's reading was not limited by any restrictions as to orthodoxy or conservatism. As for the classics, he owned Tacitus, Juvenal, Persius, Cicero, Demosthenes, Horace, Seneca, Lucian, Sophocles, Lucan, and even Ovid's *Art of Love*. Moreover, on his first trip to England he bought Plautus, and when he made his second voyage he listed among the books to be taken with him a copy of Terence. Such choices can be explained only by believing Mather to have been

<sup>1</sup> On all that follows about Increase Mather, fuller details and the authorities for my statements are given in my *Increase Mather*, Cambridge, 1925.

<sup>2</sup> J. H. Tuttle, "The Libraries of the Mathers," in *American Antiquarian Society Proceedings*, xx, 269-356.

a man whose literary tastes were broad and one whose zeal for learning never stifled his sense of humor. How else can we explain his perusal of a volume called *The Cabinet of Mirth*?

Theology and general literature were not all that he chose to read. Cotton Mather came by his scientific interests by direct inheritance, it would seem, for his father was unusual among American Puritans in his active devotion to scientific pursuits. He was a tireless observer of the facts of nature, and his books attest to his wide reading in the works of current scientists. In London in 1688 the two books he noted in his diary as ones to be sought for were scientific. In an order sent to a bookseller several years later all the items save one were scientific. We have a record that he ordered similar books for the college. Again and again one finds this or that treatise of seventeenth century science wedged in among the folios of sound divinity in his library, and the writings of Robert Boyle alone filled a long shelf in his study.

Certainly, judged merely by the books he owned, even without reference to the many others which he read, Mather seems to have been as well read as most of us are ever likely to be. He was, moreover, not only well read but widely read. He was able to savor the jesting of *The Cabinet of Mirth* as well as the close reasoning of Grotius; the sober divinity of Richard Baxter no less than the melody of Herbert; the undying literary appeal of Sophocles or Lucian together with Jeremy Taylor's brilliant prose, and the comedies of Plautus as well as the grim tales in Foxe's *Martyrs*.

If reading maketh a full man, reading as catholic in scope and as wisely chosen as Mather's should make a man broad in point of view and sympathetic toward the minds and motives of others. Certainly, whether because of his reading or not, he seems to have had a veritable

talent for friendship and a delight in human society, which goes far toward explaining why he was able to accomplish so much among men of various standards and creeds. Look at his unpublished diaries and you will find that hardly a day passed without its round of visits, its tale of visitors, or a dinner with this or that Bostonian. You will find Mather complaining that such pursuits take him from his work, but the secret of his feeling is revealed not in what he writes but in the persistence with which he continues to visit and be visited, to seek out his friends, to dine with them, and, no doubt, to discuss with them subjects both grave and gay. There is real revelation in the diary entry which relates how Mather, dining with the magistrates, was attacked by Governor Leverett for saying that there was more drunkenness in New England than in Old England. Mr. Stoughton suggested pleasantly enough that Mather should recant, evoking from the great divine only a refusal and a reflection that, if his labors were not acceptable to men they were to God. And then, recording the incident in his diary, he adds, "As for ye Governor, He hath bin ye principal Author of ye multitude of ordinaries which be in Boston, giving licenses wn ye townsmen wld not doe it. No wonder yt N. E. is visited wn ye Head is so spirited." There is something very like a pun here, and I feel sure that among his intimates Mather did not reserve all his puns to be written down later in his diary. Indeed, if I had to find a text summing up my impression of his love for human society, I should choose his son's solemn record of how "a Gentleman that made himself too much an Object of Ridicule" called Mather to visit Sir Thomas Temple, whereupon the former writes: "by being in Company, though good Company, I lost the Good Serious Frame of my Spirit." We are in no danger of forgetting the Good Serious Frame of the Puritans' Spirit, but we are less apt to remember that,



even in the Boston of two hundred and fifty years ago, there was "Company," "good Company" and, in the greatest of our ancestors, men to appreciate what Dr. Johnson called "good talk."

There are few of the early seventeenth century families of Boston unrepresented in Mather's record of his visitors and friends, but neither Boston nor New England limited his circle. Abroad there were many good Puritans who corresponded with him, took pains that he should have copies of their books, and welcomed him when he ventured overseas. To name but a few, there were Samuel Clark, biblical commentator; Thomas Beverly; round-faced Thomas Jollie; James Forbes, the much-persecuted; and John Flavel. The three greatest nonconformists of his day in England are said to have been John Owen, John Howe, and Richard Baxter. John Owen wrote a preface for one of Mather's books, taking the occasion to praise its author. John Howe met Mather in London in 1659, and was so much impressed by him that he made him his own deputy at his parish in Devonshire, thus beginning a friendship broken only by death. As for Baxter, his relations to Mather were of the closest. In London Increase visited Baxter again and again, and in an unpublished letter now in a London collection we have evidence of Baxter's admiration for his friend.<sup>1</sup> He dedicated his *Glorious Kingdom of Christ* to Mather, asking him to correct such errors as there might be in the book. Similarly John Leusden, a noted Hebrew scholar in Holland, dedicated a Psalter to Mather, and there is much other evidence to show that the minister of the Second Church was in truth, as he was said to have been, "known in both Englands,"—and, indeed, in continental Europe.

Such friends, it may be said, might have been won by Mather's scholarship, by his professional eminence, what-

<sup>1</sup> Part of this letter is printed in K. B. Murdock, *Increase Mather*, p. 266.

ever his personality, but this explanation does not account for his putting himself on good terms with many other Englishmen as quickly as he did. His long friendship with Sir Henry Ashurst, to be sure, may have been due in large measure to the fact that both men were interested in non-conformity, in Indian missions, and in the dissemination of the Gospel, but Lord Wharton was less likely to be impressed by mere zeal, and he was, we know, a friend and ally of Mather. Thomas Hollis, too, great benefactor to Harvard, remembered his meeting with Increase Mather, even though the latter seems temporarily to have forgotten it. Anthony Wood, the cantankerous Oxford historian, who, it has been said, never spoke well of any man and certainly despised nonconformity, corresponded on the most friendly terms with Mather, and afterwards took pains to record in his diary that Mather alone among dissenters was always courteous to him. Robert Boyle, one of the greatest English scientists of all time, made Mather a frequent and welcome guest. Such men and others were his companions during his London sojourns, and his record of his visits, his guests, and his dinings-out, was no less voluminous when he lived in Copt-Hall Court, Throckmorton Street, in the heart of London, than when he pursued his daily round within sight of the Second Church of Boston.

At court and in political circles, too, his capacity for making his way among men, stood him in good stead. The story of his diplomatic quest for a charter for New England, as told in the State Papers, his diaries, and his autobiography, displays a man who succeeded largely by dint of the personal influence he secured among contemporary leaders. He dined with Sir Nicholas Butler, a Catholic, to be sure, but a man of some influence at Court, and, therefore, a useful friend. Then there was Mr. Griffith, a wellknown London divine; the witty Vincent Alsop,

a Puritan influential at Whitehall; Lord Culpepper, once Governor of Virginia; and even the Earl of Sunderland, President of the Privy Council, all of whom gave Mather a hearing and aided him in greater or less degree. The famous William Penn was a constant ally, even though his Quaker principles disturbed Mather somewhat. Even Neville Payne, crafty schemer, profane playwright, and Catholic, was sought out by our shrewd New Englander. The Earl of Melfort, famed for his beauty and his skill as a dancer; Sir John Thomson; Bentinck, adviser to William III; Carstares, the King's Chaplain; John Hampden; Sir John Maynard, the Earl of Bedford, Sir Edward Harley, Alderman Love, William Sacheverell, Sir John Somers, Bishop Tillotson, Bishop Burnet—all these found time to hear Mather, and most of them joined in his cause. Such a record can be explained only by the recognition that the foremost divine in all New England won respect as easily in London as in his native Boston, where a congregation of a thousand or more looked up to him as both guide and friend. His power must have been essentially the power of a mature and broadly developed personality.

It is well known, of course, that Mather impressed not only his fellow divines, Anglican bishops, members of Parliament, followers of the court, and lords and members of the Royal Household, but the King and Queen themselves. Cotton Mather has proudly recorded how his father "stood before kings", and won fair words and more from James II, William III, and Queen Mary. There is less complete record of certain other interviews which, it seems to me, are even more significant to contemplate. These interviews are those which Mather had with certain ladies of the court.

One Blathwayt was Clerk of the Privy Council, and by no means eager to see Mather succeed in his labors for the colonies, but at the very time when he was urging

the defenders of Andros to more activity, his wife, Mrs. Mary Blathwayt, was helping William Penn and Increase Mather to secure influence with English politicians. One wishes that she had left a record as to how Mather gained her active interest. Then there were the Countess of Anglesey and Lady Clinton, both members of Puritan congregations and so the more likely to find Mather persuasive, and Madam Lockhart, one of Queen Mary's ladies, all of whom used their influence in behalf of the emissary from Boston. Most entertaining of all, I think, is the record of how Lady Jean Wemyss, Countess of Sutherland, called by Mather "a very pious and admirably prudent lady," joined forces with him. She was an energetic person, used to pleading her own cause in official circles. Her husband sat in the Privy Council, her son fought bravely for the King, and she herself was a trusted confidante of the Queen. To Mather she lent her influence, so that when he came into Queen Mary's presence Her Majesty remarked, "I have had a great character of you, from my Lady Sutherland." One's fancy delights in the picture which reveals Mather and Lady Jean Wemyss working in the same cause and exchanging good opinions of one another. There were no ladies quite like the Countess in Boston, and her garb and manner, and the Queen's ring sparkling on her hand, would have provoked interest, to say the least, had she appeared beside Maria Mather and her daughters in the Second Church at Boston. But, in England, Mather adapted himself to meet her and other women versed in the ways of the world, and, more especially, of the English Court. He, soberly clad, and somewhat impressed by the glow of many candles and the brilliant costumes dear to Pepys's heart, tuned his manner and speech to catch the ears even of the patched, powdered, and worldly-minded. Surely he did not talk only of politics or theology. Surely some latent strain

of courtliness, some aptitude for deft compliment, came to his aid. Without them he could hardly have won so easily the good offices of these "ladies of honor."

Mather's books and his friends, then, prove conclusively that he was no mere scholar, no pedantic theologian, but a man whose success was largely due to a winning and dominant personality. He must have been tolerant toward ideas and manners quite foreign to his own. And, if we admit this, we see one more reason for believing that those historians who paint both Increase and Cotton Mather as types of intolerance, narrowness, and bigotry, are sadly astray.

Certainly, quite aside from the points we have already discussed, there is abundant evidence that Increase Mather was, by the standard of his day, tolerant in matters of religion. We know that he joined in the service held at the ordination of a Baptist minister in Boston. We know that in his writings he praised certain bishops of the English Church. And, although it has not hitherto been pointed out, so far as I know, it is a fact that during his agency in England, he never actively advocated the maintenance of the old religious test for the franchise in Massachusetts. Under the first charter, one remembers, New Englanders decreed that only church members might vote. The provincial charter, which Mather brought home, provided that the test for full citizenship should be a property qualification. He not only accepted this change in the old order, but, on one occasion at least, petitioned that the new charter should make such a change. By so doing he outraged some ardent Congregationalists, but he kept faith with his own liberal principles.

It would take too long to go in detail into the other evidence as to the strength of these principles of his. It may be mentioned in passing, however, that Mather, while in London, admitted freely that New England had been

too intolerant, an admission quite out of character for a bigot or mere fanatic. We know that even in his youth he "Disliked the *Bitter Spirit* he saw in some that carried all before them; and little Approved some *Unadvised* and *Sanguinary* Things that were done by them who did all; particularly, the *Rash* Things done unto the *Quakers*." When the Baptists were troublesome to the orthodox of Boston, Mather declared, "it were better to err by *too much indulgence* towards those that have the root of the matter in them, than by *too much Severity*. Nay, as to those that are indeed Heretical I can for my own part say with Luther . . . I have no affection to *sanguinary* punishments in such Cases." In 1677 he said to the General Assembly "it is sufficiently known that I have a greater latitude & *Indulgence* in the Point of *Toleration*, than many better than myself have." Is not this proof absolute that Mather was, and that Bostonians knew him to be, more liberal minded than many of his fellow divines in seventeenth century Boston?

There is, finally, one statement of Mather's precious to all who believe in the modern ideal of academic freedom. Speaking to the students of Harvard College, he denounced Aristotle, declaring, "certainly an imp would be a fine interpreter of Aristotle", but hastened to add, "You, who are accustomed to philosophize in a liberal spirit, are pledged to the formulas of no master; and you should moreover remember that one truly golden sentiment of Aristotle: 'Find a friend in Plato, a friend in Socrates' (and I say, a friend in Aristotle) 'but be sure, above all, to find a friend in truth.'" If Mather's Harvard was sectarian, it was none the less a place where intellectual freedom was a recognized ideal.

I hope that these scattered notes point to certain definite conclusions as to the Mathers. It seems to me that such evidence as I have summarized proves that both of the



great Puritan ministers of the Second Church were essentially liberals in mind. Both were eager students of science. Both were scholars well trained in the humanities. Cotton Mather was, in aspiration at least, a literary artist, and he loved, and longed to express, the beauty of this world. His father, too, wrote good prose, and what he lacked in appreciation of external nature, he made up for by his love for mankind and the skill with which he made all sorts of men his friends. It is a high satisfaction, I think, to know and to remember that the two Mathers were men whose power was rooted in true attainment, deep and sincere zeal, real breadth, and sound humanity. They were eager-minded men, who, alive today, would, I am sure, be what we should call "modern," abreast of the day, progressive, though holding still to the good in the past, fearless in adventuring toward the right, and proud in their loyalty to the best in their forefathers' tradition. It is because they were such men that the Second Church was crowded when they preached. It is because they were not historical abstractions, but true leaders of men, whose qualities would have made them great in any era, that their ministry in Boston forms one of the brightest chapters in the church history of New England. \*

## ANNUAL MEETING, 1925

The twenty-fifth Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Historical Society was held in King's Chapel, Boston, on Thursday morning, May 14th, at 11 o'clock. The President, Rev. Henry Wilder Foote was in the chair.

The record of the last meeting was read and approved.

The report of the Librarian was read and accepted.

The report of the Treasurer, showing a balance of \$86.17 on hand, was read, accepted and placed on file.

The President reported upon his visit to England at the time of the preceding Annual Meeting, in connection with the centenary of the American Unitarian Association; and presented to the Society a set of publications of the British Unitarian Historical Society. He called attention to the importance of having the proceedings of our Historical Society published in a similar serial form. He also spoke of the exhibit at 25 Beacon Street, in the Fifield Room, arranged by a committee of the Society in connection with the 100th anniversary of the American Unitarian Association, and told of the great interest already shown in the collections which had been generously lent for the purpose.

A warm expression of thanks, in behalf of the Society, was made by the President to William Filene's Sons Company, to Sampson and Coleman, and to Mr. Frederick W. Stuart, Jr., for their aid in making the exhibition a success, by furnishing and moving cases, and in furnishing proper light for the display, which was seen by a large number of people.

The Secretary added a word concerning the objects of the Historical Society, making an appeal for a wide support and in increase in membership.

The Nominating Committee having reported, the following persons were elected officers of the Society for the ensuing year:

Rev. Henry Wilder Foote, *President*.

Rev. Charles E. Park, D.D., *Vice President*.

Hon. Winslow Warren, *Honorary Vice President*.

Julius H. Tuttle, *Secretary and Librarian*.

Frederick W. Stuart, Jr., *Treasurer*.

#### DIRECTORS

Henry Winchester Cunningham, Esq.,

Miss Harriet E. Johnson,

Edwin J. Lewis, Esq.,

Rev. George Hale Reed.

The President then introduced Rev. Professor W. W. Fenn, who read an admirable paper on "How the Schism Came," telling the story of the religious development during the half century preceding the founding of the American Unitarian Association in 1825, and the steps in the gradual unfolding of the liberal movement.

Julius H. Tuttle,  
*Secretary*.

## HISTORICAL EXHIBIT, CENTENARY OF THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

List of the principal exhibits shown on May 10th-17th, 1925, in the Fifield Room, American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, on the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Association on May 25th-26th, 1825.

### AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

Record of its Organization, May 26, 1825.

Manuscript notes of Dr. Channing's Baltimore Sermon, 1819.

Portrait of Rev. Aaron Bancroft, first President of the Association.

### ARNOLD, REV. HAROLD G.

Manuscript by Rev. Theodore Parker, and other memorabilia associated with him and with Rev. Thomas Starr King.

### *Arlington Street Church*, BOSTON

Model of the Federal Street Meeting House, 1809.

Rev. Jeremy Belknap's sermon book, showing the entries covering the meeting of the Federal Convention in the Long Lane Meeting House in January and February, 1788, and the ratification of the Constitution of the United States on February 6, 1788.

Portrait of Dr. William Ellery Channing,

Portrait of Rev. Ezra Stiles Gannett, D.D.

Letters by Dr. Channing.

### *King's Chapel*, BOSTON

Entry-book, 1686-1718.

Vestry Records, 1686-1729.

Letter from the Chapel to the Archbishop of Canterbury, 1748, begging assistance in "rebuilding this ancient ark".

Letter from the Bishop of London to the Chapel, 1749.

Letter from Bishop Provost to Rev. James Freeman,  
1787.

Invoice of organ shipment from England, 1756.

Protest against adherents of the "Stone Chapel," De-  
cember 1787.

Record of marriages, taken from the Chapel by Rev.  
Henry Caner, 1777.

Liturgy, 1768, 1785 (Freeman Edition), 1828, 1865.

Record of visits by Rev. James Freeman, 1810.

"Gemmulae Antiquae" of F. W. P. Greenwood,

Note written by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes about  
his intended marriage.

Photographs of ministers; James Freeman, 1787-1815;  
F. W. P. Greenwood, 1724-1848; Ephraim Peabody,  
1845-1856; Henry Wilder Foote, 1861-1889; Howard  
N. Brown, 1895-

#### CHANNING, MISS EVA.

Sermon case used by Rev. William Ellery Chan-  
ning, D. D.

Ribbons used in tying his sermons.

The Channing Medal.

Several letters and portraits.

Ivory fan belonging to Mrs. Channing.

#### *South Parish Church, CHARLESTOWN, N. H.*

Record book.

Pictures of the first and second structures.

#### *First Congregational Society, COHASSET, MASS.*

Two old Record Books.

#### *First Church, DEDHAM, MASS.*

First book of records, kept by Rev. John Allen, 1638-  
1671.

#### FOOTE, REV. HENRY WILDER

Letter written by Dr. Channing.

Two letters written by Rev. Theodore Parker.  
Autograph hymn by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes,  
"Twenty Sermons" by Rev. Andrew Eliot, D. D.,  
minister of the Second Church, Boston, published  
1774.

*All Souls Unitarian Church, GREENFIELD, MASS.*

Two pictures, exterior and interior of the first meeting house. •

Copy of the first covenant.

Minature of Dr. Channing.

*HAWES, DR. EDWARD S. AND THE MISSES HAWES.*

Daguerreotype of Rev. Thomas Starr King, made by  
Southworth and Hawes, Boston.

*First Church, LANCASTER, MASS.*

Portrait of Rev. Nathaniel Thayer, D. D., moderator  
of the second meeting for the organization of the  
American Unitarian Association, May 26, 1825.

*First Religious Society, NEWBURYPORT, MASS.*

Picture of the church edifice.

*Channing Memorial Church, NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND*

Pulpit gown worn by Dr. Channing, given to the  
Church by the courtesy of Sir Edwin Arnold about  
1880.

*NORCROSS, GRENVILLE H., Esq.*

Photograph of Rev. Cyrus A. Bartol.

Photograph of interior of the old West Church, Boston.

*First Unitarian Church, PHILADELPHIA, PA.*

Portrait of Rev. Joseph Priestley.

Portrait of Rev. William H. Furness.

Photostat copy of the sermon by Dr. Furness, Jan.  
1868, immediately after the Emancipation Proclamation.



Photostat of the original articles of agreements of the founding of "The Unitarian Society of Christians", June 12, 1796.

Pew deed, Dec. 1828.

Photograph of the Priestley Monument.

Photograph of the Furness Monument.

Photograph of the May Monument.

Photostat copy of an original manuscript sermon by Rev. Joseph Priestley, July 29, 1753; and letter of Prof. Smith of the University of Pennsylvania, as to the authenticity of Dr. Priestley's writing.

Two letters from Dr. Channing.

DR. HORACE HOWARD FURNESS, JR., OF PHILADELPHIA.

Photograph of Rev. W. H. Furness,

Medal of Rev. W. H. Furness, and letter written by him.

*Second Church, SALEM, MASS.*

Portrait of Rev. William Bentley, 1783-1819.

Pictures of exterior and interior of Church, 1717-1845.

*First Parish, SCITUATE, MASS.*

Record books.

*First Congregational Parish, SHARON, MASS.*

Covenant in handwriting of the first minister, Rev. Philip Curtis.

Book of Records; 1743-1800.

*First Congregational Society, SHIRLEY, MASS.*

Copy of Covenant.

Flagon.

Picture of meeting house.

Daguerreotype of Rev. Phinehas Whitney, first minister, (for fifty-five years).

Daguerreotype of Rev. Seth Chandler, minister for fifty-one years.

*Second Parish, WORCESTER, MASS.*

Record book, showing first meetings as a liberal church,  
March, 1785, kept by Rev. Aaron Bancroft, first  
President of the American Unitarian Association.

Printed volume of Aaron Bancroft's sermons, May,  
1822.

Three pictures of the meeting house.

# LIST OF ANNUAL ADDRESSES DELIVERED BEFORE THE UNITARIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY 1901—1925

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The earliest meetings of the Society were held in Channing Hall in the building of the American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, and were informal in character. Since 1904 the Annual Meeting has been regularly held in King's Chapel, Boston, except in 1923, when it was held in King's Chapel Parish House. The list of speakers and their subjects is as follows:

- May 23, 1901 Brief addresses on REV. SAMUEL WILLARD, D. D., REV. CYRUS BARTOL, D. D., and REV. ALEXANDER YOUNG, D. D., by REV. C. E. PARK, REV. GEORGE W. SOLLEY, REV. E. E. HALE, REV. S. B. STEWART, and REV. EDWARD J. YOUNG.
- May 29, 1902 PROF. T. G. MASARYK, Prague, Bohemia.  
*"The Los von Rom Movement in Austria."*
- May 21, 1903 REV. ALFRED ALTHERR, Basle, Switzerland.  
*"The Origin and Growth of the Liberal Church in Switzerland."*
- May 26, 1904 EDWIN D. MEAD, Esq., Boston.  
*"The Relation of the Unitarian Fathers to the Peace Movement in America."*  
REV. C. W. WENDTE, Boston.  
*"Laelius and Faustus Socinus."*
- May 25, 1905 REV. EDWARD EVERETT HALE, Boston.  
*"The Fort Palmer Episode and other Unitarian Memoirs."*
- May 24, 1906 REV. JOHN CARROLL PERKINS, Portland, Me.  
*"The Part of the Pioneers."*
- May 23, 1907 REV. C. E. PARK, Boston.  
*"Tablets and Memorials in our Churches."*

- May 28, 1908 REV. JAMES DE NORMANDIE, Roxbury.  
*"Some Eminent Unitarians."*
- May 27, 1909 REV. BRADLEY GILMAN, Canton.  
*"Holmes as a Religious Teacher."*
- May 26, 1910 REV. H. G. SPAULDING, Boston.  
*"Harvard College Forty Years Ago, and  
the Old Harvard Divinity School."*
- May 25, 1911 REV. C. E. PARK, Boston.  
*"History of Ordination and Installation  
Practices."*
- May 23, 1912 REV. HENRY WILDER FOOTE, Cambridge.  
*"The Harvard School of Hymnody."*  
See TRANSACTIONS OF THE UNITARIAN  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN,  
Vol. III, Part 2, Oct. 1924.
- May 22, 1913 REV. JAMES DE NORMANDIE, Roxbury,  
*"History of the Harvard Church in Char-  
lestown."*
- May 28, 1914 REV. JAMES DE NORMANDIE, Roxbury,  
*"The Brattle Street Church, Boston."*  
See PROCEEDINGS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Vol. 47, pp 223 to 231,  
entitled "THE MANIFESTO CHURCH."
- May 27, 1915 REV. CHARLES GRAVES, Albany, N. Y.  
*"An Early Unitarian Outpost."*  
SEE THE CHRISTIAN REGISTER JUNE 24,  
1915, pp. 584-586 AND JULY 1, pp. 608-611,  
ALSO REPRINT BY GEO. H. ELLIS Co. 1915.
- May 28, 1916 HON. WINSLOW WARREN, Dedham,  
*"The Value of Contemporary Opinion."*  
See PROCEEDINGS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.  
Vol. 49, pp 349-356.
- May 25, 1917 REV. C. E. PARK, Boston.  
*"Possibilities of Beauty in the Congre-  
gational Order."*  
See AMERICAN JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY,  
Vol. XXIII, No. 1, Jan. 1919.

- May 23, 1918 REV. G. L. CHANEY, Salem.  
*"The Hollis Street Church, Boston."*  
 See THE CHRISTIAN REGISTER, Nov. 28,  
 1918, p. 1134; Dec. 5, pp. 1166-7; Dec.  
 12, pp. 1191-2; Dec. 12, pp. 1215-6.
- May 22, 1919 REV. CHARLES H. LYTTLE, Brooklyn, N. Y.  
*"The Pentecost of Unitarianism"* (A study  
 of Channing's Baltimore Sermon of  
 1819.)  
 (Published for the UNITARIAN HIS-  
 TORICAL SOCIETY by THE BEACON  
 PRESS, Boston, 1920.)
- May 27, 1920 PROFESSOR W. W. FENN, Cambridge.  
*"The Farewell Address of John Robinson."*
- May 26, 1921 PROFESSOR EPHRAIM EMERTON, Cambridge.  
*"The Unitarian Debt to Orthodoxy."*
- May 25, 1922 REV. W. G. ELIOT, 2ND, Portland, Ore.  
*"The Early Days of Unitarianism on the  
 Pacific Coast."*
- May 24, 1923 PROFESSOR WALDO S. PRATT,  
 Hartford, Conn.  
*"The Earliest New England Music."*
- May 22, 1924 DR. KENNETH B. MURDOCK, Cambridge.  
*"Notes on Increase and Cotton Mather."*  
 See PROCEEDINGS OF THE UNITARIAN  
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Vol. I, 1925.
- March 19, 1925 (Special Meeting) REV. R. NICOL<sup>th</sup> CROSS,  
 Hampstead, London.  
*"Historical Sketch of British Unitarianism."*
- May 12, 1925 PROFESSOR W. W. FENN, Cambridge.  
*"How the Schism Came."*  
 See PROCEEDINGS OF THE UNITARIAN  
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Vol. I, 1925.

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THE PROCEEDINGS  
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UNITARIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY





## How the Schism Came.

WILLIAM WALLACE FENN,

*Bussey Professor of Theology in Harvard University*

The *Unitarian Review* for January, 1890, contained an article by Dean Shaler of Harvard love and fame, entitled "*Critical Points in the Continuity of Natural Phenomena*". In substance, the essay was delivered afterwards as one of a series of lectures upon the Winkley Foundation in Andover Theological Seminary which were published in book form under the title "*The Interpretation of Nature*". Briefly put Dean Shaler's theory was that while, in the light of evolution, continuity must be acknowledged, it frequently happens that within a continuous process there arise critical points at which remarkable changes unexpectedly occur, which are often of such a character that they could not have been predicted a priori. For example: when water is exposed to heat, its temperature gradually rises until at a certain fixed point it abruptly turns into steam, sustaining the relation of a gas instead of a fluid to its environment. Subject it, on the contrary, to a falling temperature, and the water becomes gradually colder until, again at a fixed point, it freezes and as ice has the properties of a solid instead of a liquid or a gas. Thus the boiling and the freezing points are critical points for water, in the continuity of a rising or falling temperature. There is a succession of small changes, but there are also sharp, unheralded transitions from one condition to another. Take another illustration, for the principle is important enough to repay clear exposition: an embryo develops in the womb until the period of gestation comes to term; then it is expelled from the womb and enters

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# THE UNITARIAN CHURCHES OF BOSTON IN 1860\*

EDWIN J. LEWIS, JR.

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In considering the churches of this, our city, at the outbreak of the Civil War, we have to remember that the Boston of 1860 was, in many respects, very different from what it is today. Within its area were included East Boston and South Boston, but Charlestown, Roxbury, Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, West Roxbury and Hyde Park, now embraced within the city limits, were then independent communities. Furthermore, that great district which we know as the Back Bay, an area of more than four million square feet, was, for the most part, mud flats and water. It is interesting in this connection to note that one of the first buildings to be erected on the new land was Arlington Street Church, begun in 1861. The population of the city in 1860 was a little less than 200,000. There were 103 churches in the town of which thirty-five were Baptist, fourteen were Orthodox Congregational, twelve were Episcopalian, ten were Methodist, two were Presbyterian, eleven were Roman Catholic, six were Universalist and twenty-one were Unitarian. It is of these twenty-one Unitarian Churches that I am to speak. Their congregations formed by far the largest group in point of numbers and their pulpits were filled by a remarkable body of preachers, distinguished alike for intellectual achievement and unselfish service to the community. We will consider the churches in the order of their foundation.

## FIRST CHURCH

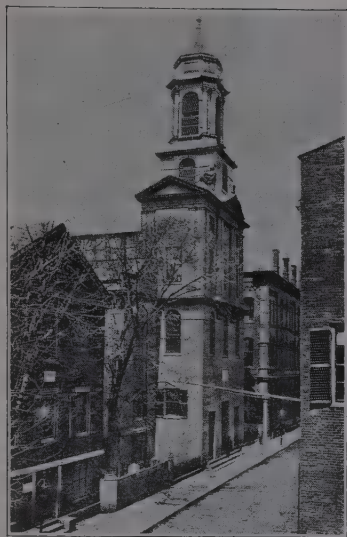
On the 27th day of August, 1630, John Winthrop, first Governor of Massachusetts, Thomas Dudley, who was for a

\*Address delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Historical Society, in Hale Chapel, First Church, Boston, May 27, 1926.

long time Deputy-Governor, and afterward Governor of the Colony, Isaac Johnson, "a gentleman of family and fortune", and John Wilson, a minister of religion, with about ninety-two others, men and women, entered into a covenant as a Church of Christ, and first met for religious services under a large tree which stood in what is now Charlestown, having installed John Wilson as teacher. After a comparatively few months, the larger portion of the worshipers removed to Tramont or Boston, and there in 1632 erected their first meeting house on the south side of what is now State Street, with Rev. John Cotton of Boston, England, as their minister. Practically nothing is known of this first building except that it had a thatched roof. It must, of necessity, have been exceedingly simple.

The Society continued to worship in this rude structure for some eight years, when the growth of the population compelled the erection of a larger edifice on what is now Washington Street, almost directly opposite the Old State House at the head of State Street. Of this building also we have no description. It was destroyed by fire October 2, 1711, and on the same site in the following year was built the "Old Brick" as it was later called, dedicated May 3, 1713. This third building was occupied by the Society for nearly 100 years and was finally taken down in 1808.

"Old Brick" was a plain rectangular box-like building with thick masonry walls and a hip roof surmounted by a small belfry with a slender spindle and vane. It looked more like a schoolhouse than like the churches to which we are accustomed. In form and plan it was the type of structure of all the early New England meeting houses, of which the "Old Ship" at Hingham is a well-known example. It held several rows of enclosed box pews around three sides, a broad aisle leading from the main entrance to the pulpit, and on either side of this aisle benches or pews called respectively "men's



First Church, Chauncey Place  
Erected 1808, showing remodeled  
roof of 1843



Second Church, Hanover Street  
Erected in 1779



Hollis Street Church  
Erected in 1810



Brattle Square Church  
Erected in 1772



body seats" and "women's body seats", the sexes being separated in early days except in the case of families.

A gallery extending around three sides was reached by a staircase in the front porch, an arrangement still to be seen in the Old South meeting house, built sixteen years later, and which is simply a meeting house of the usual type with a tower and steeple replacing one of the porches.

The fourth building of the First Church was built in Chauncey Place and dedicated July 21, 1808. The building was designed by Asher Benjamin, a prominent Boston architect of the day. During the year 1843, the structure was completely remodeled to admit of lighting from the roof. The scheme was not particularly successful but was attempted on account of the diminution of light occasioned by adjoining buildings. The minister of the church in 1860 was Rev. Rufus Ellis, during whose ministry the society moved once again to its present beautiful home at the corner of Berkeley and Marlboro Streets.

## SECOND CHURCH

The history of the Second, or Old North, Church is interesting and eventful. It has always maintained a position of influence among the churches of Boston and has numbered among its ministers and lay members some of the most distinguished men of New England. It was gathered on the fifth day of June, 1650, twenty years after the settlement of the town. Its first meeting-house, located at the head of North Square, was burned in the great fire of November 27, 1676. No description of this early structure has come down to us, but the church records give reason to suppose that some of the pews were provided with private doors through the side of the house into the street, a convenient, if unusual, device.

The second meeting-house, erected on the same site in 1677, was also of wood and of such solid construction that 100 years later it was still in excellent repair and might have



stood many years longer. It was provided with a bell and clock. The bell was rung at five o'clock in the morning, at one o'clock (the hour for closing the market), and at nine o'clock in the evening. The town's powder was stored here for a long time. During the Revolutionary War, however, while Boston was occupied by the British, this Old North Church was torn down and burnt for firewood by the soldiers. It was never replaced, but the site was sold and the parsonage of Dr. Lathrop was built thereon.

The Second Church has gathered into itself, at different periods, two other churches. In 1779, after the destruction of the meeting-house just referred to, it formed a union with what was called the New Brick Church, founded in 1721 by a number of seceders from Brattle Square Church, of which I will presently speak; persons dissatisfied with the call of Rev. Peter Thacher from his society at Weymouth. The brick meeting-house of the New Brick Church, which stood on Hanover Street, became the home of the united societies until, in March, 1844, the building was taken down and a splendid new Gothic edifice erected in its stead, an imposing structure with a steeple rising 220 feet from the ground.

On account of a division of feeling, wholly sectional, between the North End and South End portions of the parish, the new building was, in 1849, sold to the Methodists. The Second Church, and nearly all the congregation, removed with the minister, first to the Masonic Temple, and afterwards to the Chapel in Freeman Place, which was purchased from the society which Rev. James Freeman Clarke was serving. In 1854, the Society purchased the beautiful house of worship in Bedford Street, belonging to the "Church of Our Saviour", and united with this small but excellent society by whom that noble red sandstone edifice had been erected. This Bedford Street building, designed by Hammatt Billings, was in the Early English style of architecture and was a distinct addition to the city from an artistic stand-

point. It was taken down stone by stone in 1872 and re-erected in a modified form in Copley Square. Later still, on the removal of the Second Church to its present location in Audubon Circle, the Copley Square structure again took to itself wings and now forms a part of "The Church of All Nations".

The Second Church may well take pride in the list of remarkable divines who have occupied its pulpit, numbering among others, John Mayo, Increase Mather, Cotton Mather, John Lathrop, Henry Ware and Ralph Waldo Emerson. The minister in the year 1860 was Rev. Chandler Robbins, D.D., who was born in Lynn, February 14, 1810, graduated from Harvard College in the class of 1829 and from the Divinity School in 1833. Soon after graduation he accepted a unanimous call to become the minister of the Second Church, as the successor of Ralph Waldo Emerson. He was ordained on December 4, 1833, and maintained an unbroken pastorate over this one church for forty-one years until, in 1874, having preached the sermon at the dedication of the new place of worship in Copley Square, he retired from the active ministry. Dr. Robbins died, after a short illness, on the 11th of September, 1882, loved and respected by all who knew him.

### KING'S CHAPEL

The society worshipping in King's Chapel was formed in June, 1686, being the first Episcopal society in New England. Its first church building, which was of wood, was completed in 1689, and stood on the spot covered by the present chapel. In 1710, it was enlarged, but, falling into decay, was replaced by the present granite structure, opened for worship August 21, 1754. This ancient church, designed by Peter Harrison of Newport, has perhaps the most worshipful interior in Boston today. In 1785, the proprietors voted that certain changes were desirable in the ritual of the church and on June 19 of

that year an amended liturgy was adopted, and this has since been retained without material modifications.

The connection of the society with the American Episcopal Church was terminated on the ordination of Rev. James Freeman, who, on November 18, 1787, after the usual Sunday evening service, was ordained by Dr. Thomas Bulfinch, the senior warden of the Chapel, acting for the congregation, to be "Rector, minister, priest, pastor, teaching elder and public teacher" of their society. Rev. James Freeman served the Chapel as reader, rector and minister for fifty-three years. The Chapel was, in 1860, without a settled minister, Dr. Ephraim Peabody having died on Thanksgiving Day, 1856, after a pastorate of nearly eleven years, but Rev. Henry W. Foote was installed as its minister in 1861.

Dr. Peabody was one of the most beloved and impressive preachers of his generation. He was remarkable for the clearness of his mind, the delicacy of his perceptions, and the warmth of his heart. A remarkable beauty of face and figure added to his impressiveness as a preacher, and his peculiar charm lay in the gentleness, simplicity, and sincerity of his speech and life. In refutation of the popular stricture regarding "ministers' sons and deacons' daughters" it may not be amiss to note that of the four children that survived Dr. Peabody, one daughter, Ellen Derby Peabody, became the wife of Dr. Charles W. Eliot, President of Harvard College; another daughter, Anna Huidekoper Peabody, married Dr. Henry W. Bellows, of New York; a son, Robert Swain Peabody was President of the American Institute of Architects and Dr. Francis Greenwood Peabody became Plummer Professor in Harvard University and Dean of the Harvard Divinity School.

#### BRATTLE SQUARE CHURCH

In the year 1697, Thomas Brattle conveyed a piece of land in Brattle Close to an association of persons for religious pur-

poses. A simple wooden structure was erected thereon and here Dr. Benjamin Coleman, of London, began his ministry in what is known as the "Manifesto Church". It was so called on account of a document or manifest, in which, contrary to the principles professed by the Puritan churches of that time, the founders of this society advocated a freer institution, which tolerated the reading of the Scriptures in public worship, baptism of children whose parents were not full members of the church, admission to the church without public relation of experience, and the right of every individual member of the congregation who contributed to its support to vote in its affairs. These principles were afterwards adopted by all Congregational churches, but this Brattle Square Church has often been referred to as the first Protestant church in America.

The original wooden meeting-house was made to serve its purpose for nearly seventy-five years, but in 1772 it was finally taken down and on its foundations rose a commodious brick church costing \$40,000, to which sum Gov. John Hancock contributed one-eighth.

The church was served by many eminent ministers: Peter Thacher, J. S. Buckminster, Edward Everett, John Palfrey, and, last but not least, Dr. Samuel K. Lothrop who, in 1860, had been settled twenty-six years.

On September 14, 1871, almost exactly one hundred years after the building of the brick meeting-house, the society laid the corner stone of the new Brattle Square Church at the corner of Commonwealth Avenue and Clarendon Street, the "Church of the Angels" now occupied by the First Baptist Church. The building of this new church involved a very heavy debt, and the structure proved acoustically defective. Dr. Lothrop urged that the cause be maintained; but, after a year or more of effort, the society, in 1876, voted to disband. No church in Boston could in its day boast a more distinguished body of worshipers and liberal contributors, num-

bering among others, Presidents John Adams and John Quincy Adams, Gov. John Hancock, Gov. Bowdoin, Harrison Gray Otis, Daniel Webster, Chief Justice Parker, Theodore Lyman, William, Amos and Abbott Lawrence, and many more.

### NEW NORTH CHURCH

The New North, at the corner of Hanover and Clark Streets, near the East Boston ferry, was the fifth congregational society organized in the town. Its first meeting-house was dedicated May 5, 1714, enlarged in 1730 to nearly double its original size, and replaced in 1804 by an imposing edifice, built at a cost of \$26,570.96. This structure was designed by Charles Bulfinch, and is the only one of his many churches still standing in Boston today.

The refined and dignified exterior with its stone pilasters, graceful tower and cupola, is now disfigured by a covering of somber paint, but an effort is being made to have this removed so that this truly beautiful work of Boston's most eminent architect may show its real worth. The interior, with its double colonnade supporting the galleries and arched ceiling, is still handsome although much of its original elegance has vanished since the meeting-house became a Roman Catholic church.

I cannot let this opportunity pass without a word of appreciation of Charles Bulfinch, the most eminent citizen Boston has yet produced, to whom all our citizens and particularly we Unitarians owe a deep debt of gratitude. What Wren was to London, Bulfinch was to Boston and far more.

The minister of the New North in 1860 was Rev. Robert C. Waterston, the latest in a list which included Rev. John Webb, Dr. Andrew Eliot, Dr. John Eliot and Dr. Francis Parkman. In 1863 the New North united with the Bulfinch Street Church, of which Rev. William R. Alger was the minister. Later still the joint society migrated with the

pastor, Mr. Alger, to Music Hall, where it had a brief period of prosperity, then sank into decline and dissolution.

#### NEW SOUTH, OR CHURCH GREEN

The first meeting of the proprietors of the New South Church was held at the "Bull" tavern on the 14th of July, 1715. In September of the same year they petitioned for a parcel of land called "Church Green", at the junction of what is now Summer and Bedford Streets, for the purpose of building a church thereon. A more suitable site could not have been obtained. By situation and name it was doubtless intended for the use made of it. The building was dedicated on January 8, 1717.

Nearly 100 years later this original structure was replaced by the beautiful edifice which we associate with the name "Church Green", and dedicated December 29, 1814. This church was designed by Charles Bulfinch and was perhaps the finest example of his ecclesiastical work. It was octagonal in plan with a Greek portico at the front. Built of white hammered granite with a graceful steeple 190 feet high, shaded on either side by elms and horse-chestnut trees, this structure was probably the handsomest in the town. The New South Church was taken down in 1868 to give place to mercantile structures. The beautifully carved communion table is still in use today in the First Parish Church in Dorchester.

Following a long line of distinguished divines, the minister in 1860 was Rev. Orville Dewey. Dr. Dewey's pastorate at Church Green was but temporary, four years in all. The physical infirmity which had occasioned his resignation from the Church of the Messiah in New York, again attacked him and he was compelled, in 1862, to permanently relinquish the active ministry. He lived in peaceful retirement for twenty years and passed quietly away on March 21, 1882, within one week of his eighty-eighth birthday. Dr. Bellows has this to say of him:—"Dr. Dewey's nature was char-



acterized from early youth by a massive intellectual power with an almost feminine sensibility; a poetic imagination with a rare dramatic faculty of representation. . . . He had every quality for a great preacher in a time when the old foundations were broken up and men's minds were demanding guidance and support in the critical transition from the days of pure authority to the days of personal conviction by rational evidence; and no exaltation that the Church of the Messiah will ever attain can in any probability equal that which will always be given to it as the seat of Dr. Dewey's thirteen years' ministry in the city of New York."

#### FEDERAL STREET CHURCH

In 1720, and for several years following, many Scotch Presbyterians came to New England. A considerable group of these with Rev. John Moorhead as their leader settled in Boston. Although they were a desirable acquisition to the town, being orderly and industrious, they at first met with a cold reception, being looked upon as inferiors and intruders. Nevertheless, these newcomers purchased in 1729, a plot of ground at the corner of Berry Street and Long Lane, and converted a barn which stood on the premises into a meeting-house. This humble edifice, with slight additions, served them as a place of worship for the first fifteen years. In 1744 a substantial wooden building was erected on the same site after the fashion of the meeting-houses of that day, with a tower on the Berry Street end and the main entrance on the side. With this old structure there are many interesting associations. Within its walls the delegates met in convention to decide whether Massachusetts should adopt the Federal Constitution proposed for the United States; and here it was finally accepted on February 7, 1788. It was owing to this circumstance that the name of Long Lane was changed to Federal Street.



This second wooden meeting-house was replaced in 1809 by a fine brick church designed by Charles Bulfinch in what was then regarded as the Gothic style. This was the first building of the type to be erected in Boston. It was taken down in 1859, giving way to the demands of business. The Society proceeded immediately to the erection of its present building, Arlington Street Church, begun in 1861 and dedicated four years later. It was one of the earliest structures built upon the Back Bay and is rightly regarded today as one of the finest church buildings in the city.

In 1786 the Society relinquished its Presbyterian affiliation and adopted the Congregational form with a tendency towards Unitarianism. Dr. Jeremy Belknap, the eminent scholar and historian, was installed as minister the following year. On June 1, 1803, Dr. William Ellery Channing began his pastorate, an association which was only terminated by his death October 2, 1842. The name of Berry Street was changed to Channing in his honor. The minister of the church in 1860 was Dr. Ezra Stiles Gannett. He was born in Cambridge on the fourth day of May, 1801, and graduated with first honors at Harvard. In the Divinity school he must have added to his bright seriousness; for one October day, soon after finishing the course, Dr. Channing, Boston's leading preacher, knocked at his door. He came to ask him to preach half the time for him. In fifteen services he ministered, and then the parish gave the call, and the young man became Dr. Channing's colleague in the Federal Street meeting-house and later his successor. This ministry continued, with occasional interruptions caused by ill health, for forty-seven years, until his sad death in the Revere railroad accident, August 26, 1871.

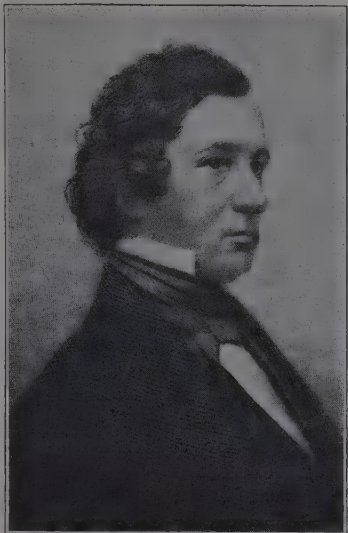
#### HOLLIS STREET CHURCH

With the growth of the town southward, the necessity was felt for a place of worship nearer than Summer Street, and

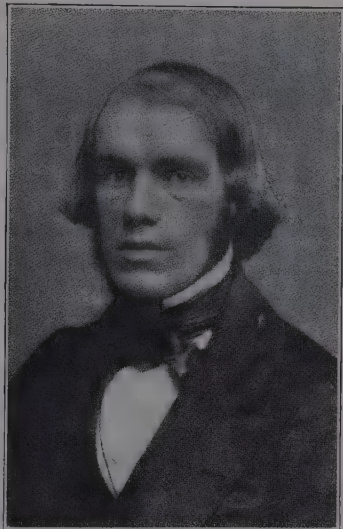
Gov. Belcher, who resided in the vicinity, gave the site, and a small wooden meeting-house was erected in 1732 on what was originally Harvard Street, afterward renamed Hollis Street in honor of Mr. Thomas Hollis, an eminent London merchant, and benefactor of Harvard College. The first minister of the young society was Dr. Mather Byles, ordained December 17, 1732, and ministering to this congregation for forty-four years. Dr. Byles enjoyed a great local reputation as a wit and punster. When the War of the Revolution finally broke out, he found himself out of sympathy with the sentiments of his flock and he was dismissed from his pastorate in 1776.

The original meeting-house was destroyed by the great fire of 1787, but, nothing daunted, the society reared its second wooden edifice on the same site the following year, one of the earliest buildings designed by Charles Bulfinch. In 1810 this new structure was found too small for the rapidly increasing congregation and it was placed on a raft and floated down the harbor to East Braintree, where Rev. Jonas Perkins preached in it for forty-seven years. This Bulfinch building was replaced in 1810 by the "Hollis Street Church" as many of us remember it, an extremely dignified structure, the work of an unknown architect.

Among the eminent ministers of this society have been John Pierpont, whose pastorate lasted twenty-six years, and Thomas Starr King, installed in 1848, and who was still the minister in 1860, although he had been given a leave of absence of fifteen months to preach in the Unitarian church in San Francisco, which became his permanent parish. His work in this western outpost was so successful that, at the close of the first year of his pastorate, the church debt had been paid off, the society was on a solid basis, the strongest Protestant church in the city. Starr King was ordained and settled originally as a Universalist minister, but the dividing barriers between the Universalist and Unitarian bodies were



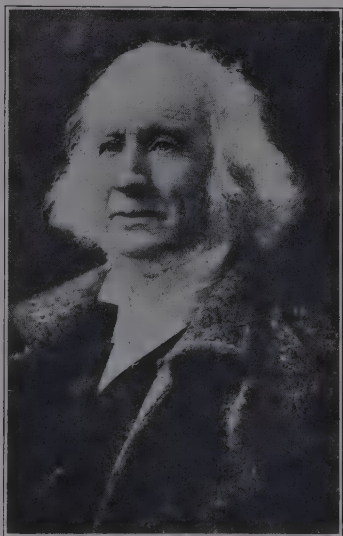
REV. CHANDLER ROBBINS



REV. EDWARD EVERETT HALE, 1855



REV. SAMUEL K. LOTHROP



REV. CYRUS A. BARTOL



so slight that when he was installed over Hollis Street Church in 1848, Dr. Ballou and Dr. Chapin participated in the services with Dr. Dewey, Dr. Frothingham, Dr. Bartol and William R. Alger. In the year 1887, the Hollis Street Society united its fortunes with the South Congregational Church and the Hollis Street meeting-house was sold and now forms a part of the Hollis Street Theatre.

### WEST CHURCH

West Church was gathered January 3, 1737, consisting of seventeen members. The first edifice, small and of wood, was finished in the following April. This structure served its purpose for many years but was superseded in 1806 by the building still standing in Lynde Street, facing Cambridge Street. It is now used as a branch of the Boston Public Library. The interior was particularly fine, exceedingly dignified yet charming in its simplicity. It may be of interest to note in passing that the ornate mahogany pulpit designed for, and used in this church, is serving the same purpose today in the First Parish Church in Dorchester. As an example of the speed with which buildings were erected a century and more ago, it is interesting to know that the corner stone of this large and elaborate structure, seating more than a thousand people, was laid April 4, 1806, and the church was fully completed and dedicated in the following November, seven months later.

The first pastor was Rev. William Hooper, from Scotland, and the second, Dr. Jonathan Mayhew of Martha's Vineyard. The two ministers of the church in 1860 were Dr. Charles Lowell and Rev. Cyrus A. Bartol. Dr. Bartol was for more than half a century a bright luminary of the Boston pulpit. Born in the little town of Freeport, Maine, April 30, 1813, graduating from Harvard Divinity School in 1835, he spent a single year of apprenticeship at Cincinnati and was then called to the historic West Church as the associate and sure

successor of the venerable and beloved Dr. Charles Lowell. His ordination took place in 1837, and was the beginning of a pastorate lasting sixty-two years till, in 1889, on account of a redistribution of the city population, the old parish was dissolved and the meeting-house devoted to other uses.

#### HAWES PLACE CHURCH, SOUTH BOSTON

Liberal religious services were held in South Boston as early as 1810. Hawes Place Church was formed October 27, 1819, the society having been incorporated the preceding year. The meeting-house was built in 1832 and dedicated on New Year's Day of the year following.

The first minister, Rev. Mr. Wood, was ordained November 13, 1821, but died within a few months, being succeeded by Rev. Lemuel Capen who was the pastor of the church for seventeen years. The minister at the time we are considering was Rev. Thomas Dawes, installed May 22, 1854. He was a graduate of Harvard College, a classmate of Dr. Edward Everett Hale, and was a descendent of the famous William Dawes who shared the honors with Paul Revere in that memorable ride in the early morning of the 19th of April, 1775. Mr. Dawes died in Brewster, Mass., November 25, 1904, after a pastorate of thirty-two years in the ancient First Parish Church in that town.

#### BULFINCH STREET SOCIETY

Up to the year 1822 there were but two churches in that quarter of the city we now know as the West End, the West Church in Lynde Street and the Baptist Church in Charles Street. The Universalist Church in Hanover Street was at that time overflowing. A portion of the worshipers there, together with independent persons outside, joined to build a new house of worship on Bulfinch Street on the northerly slope of Beacon Hill.



On October 7, 1822, the corner stone of a substantial brick building, 74 x 70 feet was laid and the church was dedicated on the 7th of May following. The church possessed a particularly attractive interior with commodious vestry rooms in the basement. The building was later torn down and the site is now occupied by the Bulfinch Place Chapel. It was incorporated under the name of the Central Universalist Society. Rev. Paul Dean was installed on the day of dedication as its first minister. By a unanimous vote of the proprietors, in March 1838, application was made to the Legislature for a change of name, for the reason, as set forth in their memorial, "that the term Universalist, as now theologically defined, expresses a meaning inconsistent with their faith". The petition was granted and they were authorized to take the name of "Bulfinch Street Society". The list of the ninety-three original proprietors contains the names of many of the most substantial citizens of the town and their descendents are the active supporters of our churches today. The minister of the church in 1860 was Rev. William Rounsville Alger.

William Rounsville Alger was born December 30, 1822. Thrown at an early age upon his own resources, he obtained work in the cotton mills at Hookset, N. H. His desire for knowledge was such that he devoted the greater part of his leisure time to study. Fastening pages of his grammar on a post in the mill, he committed them to memory as he tended his machines. In the odd moments of rest he worked out problems in arithmetic and algebra, with a bit of chalk on a strip of wood, or read a page in some history or romance. At the end of five years, having fitted himself and saved sufficient money to pay for tuition, he entered the academy at Pembroke, N. H., where he remained one year. He then went to the academy at Lebanon, and from there, after a half year's instruction, to the Cambridge Theological School, from which he was graduated in 1847. In September of the same



year, he was ordained over the Mount Pleasant Congregational Society in Roxbury. In 1852, Harvard University conferred on him the honorary degree of Master of Arts. In 1855, he resigned the pastorate of the Roxbury church, to accept a call from the Bulfinch Street Society of Boston. In 1857, he accepted an invitation to deliver the Fourth of July oration before the city authorities of Boston, and improved the occasion, although the pro-slavery feeling was then at its height, by an uncompromising protest against the slave power at the South and its upholders at the North. The Board of Aldermen refused to pass the customary vote of thanks. Seven years later, in 1864, the vote was passed. In 1868, he was chosen chaplain of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, and in the autumn of the same year, the members of his church and others of the liberal faith organized a society for the holding of free services in Boston Music Hall. There he preached to Sunday congregations of from two to three thousand persons, until in 1873, after a period of ill health, he resigned. In December of the following year he accepted a call from the Church of the Messiah in New York.

#### TWELFTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

In 1823, several gentlemen having conferred together on the subject of the increasing population of Boston, resolved to attempt the formation of a new Society of Liberal Christians. As a result of a subscription paper which was circulated, 102 persons expressed their willingness to share in the expense of the undertaking, provided the location of the contemplated meeting-house should be in the western section of the town, where many families resided who were unable to find seats in any neighboring church of their own faith. The proprietors of the new Society were incorporated June 14, 1824, as the "Twelfth Congregational Society in the City of Boston". The meeting-house was completed at a cost of \$34,000, and solemnly dedicated to the worship of God,

October 13 of the same year, 1824. It is pleasantly situated on Chambers Street, between Allen and McLean Streets and is shaded by trees on three sides. The building contains 150 pews, seating a thousand people and has a commodious vestry.

Rev. Samuel Barrett, D.D. was ordained and settled as the first minister and was still pastor of the church in 1860. Samuel Barrett was born at Royalton, Vt., August 16, 1795. By hard struggles and with the assistance of his minister, Rev. Thomas Beede, he prepared himself to enter Harvard College, from which he graduated in 1818, supporting himself throughout the course and while in the Divinity School. He received calls to the churches in Philadelphia, Baltimore and Keene, but declined them all, finally accepting the invitation of the Twelfth Congregational Society in Boston and was ordained in the new church on February 9, 1825. His ministry in this church lasted for thirty-five years, until his final retirement in 1860, although continuing active in all good causes until his death on June 24, 1866.

Dr. Barrett had a large endowment of common sense. He was firm and dignified in manner, conciliatory in disposition, easily winning and holding the implicit confidence of his people. He was active in the organization of the American Unitarian Association, was elected one of the original governing board, serving thereon for sixteen years. He was one of the editors of the *Unitarian Advocate* and of *The Christian Register*. He was for six years President of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches and wrote many of the earlier tracts issued by the American Unitarian Association.

The Twelfth Congregational meeting-house is now St. Joseph's Catholic Church. It is certainly not deserted today. On a recent visit to the old building, now 102 years old, I counted on the roll of honor posted in the vestibule the names of 366 young men of the parish who had served their country in the World War. The architect of the building was Alexander Parris. Charlotte Cushman sang in the original choir.

## THIRTEENTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

On the 7th of September, 1825, was laid the corner stone of a new Unitarian meeting-house at the corner of Purchase and Pearl Streets, near Griffin's Wharf, where the tea ships lay on the night of the memorable "Boston Tea Party". This was then a respectable part of the town and the society was gathered expressly for the ministry of Rev. George Ripley, its first minister. From its location it was called the "Purchase Street Church". This original structure, seating about three hundred people, was a remarkably unattractive edifice of rough granite with a small belfry on the roof. The interior is said to have been as homely as the outside. Nevertheless this building remained the home of the society for more than twenty years, but owing to a rather sudden change in the neighborhood population, it was found inconvenient by a majority of the worshipers and the meeting-house was sold to the Roman Catholics and destroyed in the Great Fire of 1872. A new and sumptuous place of worship was erected at the corner of Harrison Avenue and Beach Street, and dedicated May 3, 1848. At the same time the name of the society was changed to the "Thirteenth Congregational Church of the City of Boston".

The society had but two ministers during its comparatively brief existence of thirty-two years, Rev. George Ripley, 1826-1841, and Rev. James I. T. Coolidge, 1842-1858. The church was dissolved shortly after the close of Mr. Coolidge's pastorate.

George Ripley was the most active originator and earnest supporter of the Brook-Farm experiment. He was actively identified with the Transcendentalist movement and one of the first students in this country to master the teachings of the great German leaders in philosophy. Although an acceptable preacher, he early found that ministry in a small parish church did not greatly appeal to him and, withdrawing in 1841 from the Purchase Street Church pulpit, he gave himself

unreservedly to literary pursuits. In 1849 he connected himself with the *New York Tribune* and soon became one of its leading editors and the recognized chief among American literary critics. He continued to be the literary editor of the *Tribune* until his death in 1880.

#### SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

An association of citizens at the south end of the town founded, in 1827, a society with the title, "South Congregational Church". Hollis Street Church was at this time so crowded that many families in this quarter could not obtain seats in any convenient place of worship. The corner stone of a commodious brick edifice seating a thousand persons was laid August 7 of that year at the corner of Washington and Castle Streets, and was dedicated January 30, 1828.

Rev. Mellish Irving Motte, the first pastor, was ordained May 21 of the same year, Dr. Channing preaching the sermon. Mr. Motte, whose ministry lasted about fourteen years, was followed by Rev. Frederic D. Huntington, and he in turn, in 1856, by Edward Everett Hale. The tide of population had been setting steadily toward the South End. Dover Street had become almost "down-town" and the major portion of the congregation lived much farther out on the "Neck", as it was called. For this reason, the old meeting-house was sold and a new one built on Union Park Street in 1861. Changes in the character of the population at the South End continued and the increasing desirability of the "Back Bay" as a residential locality brought about a union with Hollis Street Church in 1887, and the society thus enlarged moved to a third new building at the corner of Newbury and Exeter Streets, and here Dr. Hale continued to preach up to the time of his death, June 10, 1909, after an active ministry of sixty-seven years. Within the past year the South Congregational Society has united with the First Church in Boston.

### PITTS STREET CHAPEL

This modest structure is of special interest on account of its association with the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches. The first chapel was erected in Chapel Place, Friend Street, and was called Friend Street Chapel. The first service was held therein November 10, 1827. A second building was erected on Pitts Street and dedicated November 13, 1836. It remained the home of the congregation until Bulfinch Place Chapel was built on the site of the Bulfinch Place Church previously described. The founder and first minister of the Chapel was Rev. Joseph Tuckerman, and his successor at the time we are considering, and for many years afterwards, was Rev. S. H. Winkley.

### WARREN STREET CHAPEL

With all its grand virtues, sympathetic care of the poor, the unfortunate and the outcast non-elect was never a strong point of Calvinism. The abyss between the respectable and highly moral church-going community and the feeble-minded, will-less and vicious element, was, at the beginning of the nineteenth century yawning wider, year by year. The first man vividly to take in this situation was Joseph Tuckerman who founded a chapel of his own in Friend Street and devoted his life to helping solve the problem of poverty, ignorance and vice. Dr. Tuckerman's most ardent disciple was Charles Francis Barnard. Graduating from the Harvard Divinity School in 1831, he was ordained to the ministry-at-large, and devoted all his energy to the idea of the "Children's Church".

The corner stone of Warren Street Chapel, now known as the Barnard Memorial, was laid July 23, 1835. Within its cheerful atmosphere every kind of hidden talent and virtuous disposition of the boys and girls was brought to the surface and developed. Departments of many sorts and varied activities were successfully instituted and carried on. No one, in



any sphere of life, could resist the enthusiasm of young Barnard's appeal. Edward Everett, Starr King, Robert C. Winthrop came to talk to the children, Jenny Lind and Sonntag to sing to them, and Agassiz to reveal the marvels of nature. Within its walls were first organized night schools for immigrant adults, vacation schools for street waifs, day nurseries for infants and many other agencies now adopted by the city or taken over by welfare organizations. This happy work engaged Mr. Barnard until 1864 when, on account of failing health, he was compelled to withdraw from active service.

#### SUFFOLK STREET CHAPEL

The Free Chapel on Shawmut Avenue, corner of Rutland Street, originally called Suffolk Street Chapel, was one of the chapels connected with the ministry-at-large, established under the auspices of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches. This chapel was built in the year 1839 on land that was given by the city, according to a grant in 1806, to the first religious association that should erect a church thereon. The building was of stone and cost \$15,000. It is still standing today and is now the place of worship of the First Swedish Baptist Church.

The minister of the Chapel in 1860 was Rev. Samuel B. Cruft. Mr. Cruft was born in Boston, December 19, 1816, and graduated at the Harvard Divinity School in 1839. After preaching for a time in Lexington, he entered the ministry-at-large, and was minister of Suffolk Street Chapel from 1846 to 1862. He was for some years secretary of the Children's Mission. A man of reverent spirit, scholarly habit, open of heart and hand, and after his retirement he was a good parishioner as he had been a faithful minister. He died in Boston, February 7, 1899.

## CHURCH OF THE DISCIPLES

The Church of the Disciples was founded in 1841 by Rev. James Freeman Clarke, who continued to be its pastor until his death on June 8, 1888. The society first worshiped in Ritchie Hall, Amory Hall and the Masonic Temple. Later it erected the chapel in Freeman Place (named after Rev. James Freeman of King's Chapel) which it occupied until, in 1850, on account of the illness of the pastor and other reasons, its public worship was temporarily suspended, and the chapel was sold to the Second Church. The little church continued to live,—in its Bible classes, conducted by each member in turn, and in its communion service held in the same manner. One of the lay volunteers was John A. Andrew, afterwards the war governor of Massachusetts.

When Mr. Clarke returned to Boston in 1854, a living nucleus was ready to receive him and to aid him in carrying on the Church of the Disciples. The three principles on which this society was founded are:—

1. The voluntary principle, each member paying according to his ability for the support of the church, and all seats being free.

2. The social principle, each member feeling responsible for the spiritual welfare of the church as a sort of assistant pastor.

3. Congregational worship, the congregation sharing in the service, singing the hymns, and joining in the prayers and responsive readings.

In 1860 the society was occupying a chapel on Indiana Place. This was soon outgrown and a larger place of worship was built on the corner of Warren Avenue and West Brookline Street. Later still the church erected its present handsome edifice in the Back Bay section. Time does not permit an extended review of the great work done by James Freeman Clarke in the advocacy of the none too popular causes of anti-slavery, equal suffrage, civil service reform, temperance, the care of neglected children and improvements in education.



He was a Unitarian, but his broad sympathy, absolute candor and the entire absence of the controversial spirit caused him to be deeply respected by members of Trinitarian churches. In his personality and his writings he has probably done as much as any man in our communion to heal the breach between Orthodoxy and Unitarianism.

#### TWENTY-EIGHTH CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY

In the early days of the Unitarian controversy the exchange of pulpits was looked upon as a sign of amity, and refusal to exchange was a marked sign of disapproval and a denial of Christian fellowship. In the winter of 1841 and 1842 Theodore Parker, minister of the First Church in West Roxbury, delivered in Masonic Temple, Boston, a series of Sunday afternoon lectures, afterwards printed in 1842 under the title "A Discourse on Matters Pertaining to Religion".

The next year, from September, 1843, to September, 1844, he spent in Europe. On his return he found "the storm signal still displayed over Boston Unitarianism". Few ministers were willing to exchange with him. Mr. Sargent, minister of Suffolk Free Chapel, conducted by the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches, exchanged pulpits with Parker in November, 1844, and lost his position in consequence, and James Freeman Clarke, who also exchanged with him in January, 1845, witnessed the withdrawal of fifteen families from his church in disapproval. On January 22, 1845, a few earnest men met together and declared by vote "that Theodore Parker have a chance to be heard in Boston"; and in pursuance of this resolution, Parker preached in the Melodeon on Sunday, February 16, 1845. In November of the same year, the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society was organized, which on January 4, 1846, installed Theodore Parker as its minister. From that time until his last sermon preached in Boston Music Hall (whither his congregation had removed from the Melodeon in 1852) on Sunday, January 2, 1859, Parker was

far and away the most influential man in the Boston pulpit.

Scholarship has moved so rapidly and firmly since Parker's day that his critical conclusions, revolutionary as they seemed a half century ago, have been long overpassed, and are today almost conservative commonplaces. It would be unprofitable, as it is unnecessary, to dwell upon them. As one of his biographers has truly said, "America will not forget Theodore Parker, the valiant prophet of the moral self, the emancipator, setting man free from traditionalism and convention, and bringing him face to face with God manifest in the world without, abiding in the soul within".

#### CHURCH OF OUR FATHER, EAST BOSTON

Efforts were made to establish Unitarian worship in East Boston as early as 1835, but no formal society was organized until some years later, in 1852, when a church was gathered under the leadership of Rev. Warren H. Cudworth who had graduated from Harvard Divinity School the previous year. The young pastor took up his work with earnest faith and so infused his hopeful spirit and enthusiasm into his people that within the year they had purchased a lot, built and furnished a meeting-house which was dedicated December 29, 1852.

Mr. Cudworth organized all elements of his parish, young and old, into agencies of helpfulness so that by 1855, three years later, the society had increased from 60 to 117 regularly enrolled families. He was a public-spirited citizen, outspoken in his convictions as to the moral obligations of citizens in relation to temperance, education and law enforcement, and he early became the recognized "pastor of the unchurched" of East Boston. The success, growth and efficiency of his Sunday School are well known. On receipt of the news of the fall of Fort Sumter, Mr. Cudworth offered his services to Gov. Andrew and was appointed chaplain of the First Massachusetts regiment and served in this capacity throughout the War. At its close he again took up the work of his ministry,

now doubly endeared to his people by his great experiences. His sudden death on Thanksgiving Day, 1883, while in the midst of the opening prayer at the union service of the churches in East Boston, was a sad blow to the church and to the community.

#### CHURCH OF THE UNITY

A liberal religious society was founded in Canton Street in the year 1857 of which Rev. George Hughes Hepworth was the minister. The society, which adopted the name Church of the Unity, grew rapidly and in 1860 was able to erect a fine building in Newton Street, where audiences of fifteen hundred were frequently gathered to hear Mr. Hepworth preach.

George Hughes Hepworth was a Boston boy, a pupil of the Boston Latin School and a graduate of the Harvard Divinity School in 1853. During the Civil War he rendered distinguished service to his country while serving on the staff of General Banks. Upon his return to resume his pastoral duties he became a leader in numerous public-spirited enterprises in his native city. He was the founder of the Boston School for the Ministry, which was later absorbed by the Harvard Divinity School.

Mr. Hepworth was essentially a preacher. With the backing of William H. Baldwin of the Young Men's Christian Union and a few others, he instituted a wonderfully successful series of services in the Boston Theatre. Of all the clergymen who participated in this theatre preaching, Mr. Hepworth was by far the most popular. In the early seventies he accepted a call to the Church of the Messiah in New York and was succeeded at the Church of the Unity by Rev. Martin K. Schermerhorn, who was in turn followed by Rev. Minot J. Savage. After a brief joint pastorate with Rev. Robert Collyer in the Church of the Messiah, Mr. Hepworth modified his theological views and became Trinitarian. During the

latter part of his life he was one of the editors of the *New York Herald*.

The Church of the Unity was the last Unitarian Society organized within the boundaries of the old city. Four years later came the Civil War with its many distractions and the great expansion of commercial interests. At about the same time the development of the South End and the evolution of the Back Bay ushered in a period of general redistribution of the population. Closely following, occurred the Great Fire of 1872 which swept away a large section of the earlier town.

The year 1860 may be truly said to mark the termination of an era in our history. With its close, the Boston of early days became a memory. The simple comfortable homes, the narrow tree-shaded streets and the secluded and picturesque courts and gardens rapidly disappeared before the more prosaic requirements of trade. One by one the Protestant places of worship of every denomination vanished, until today the number of such churches then standing which are used for religious services can be counted on the fingers of a single hand. Christ Church, Salem Street, still maintains the open door at the North End, the Old South meeting-house has become a showplace of historic interest, the West Church now shelters a branch of the Public Library, the Baptist Church on Charles Street\* is rejoicing in a recent renovation, while Park Street Church, Saint Paul's and our own King's Chapel alone maintain the old traditions in the heart of Old Boston. The fifty churches rebuilt by Sir Christopher Wren in old London two hundred and fifty years ago are gone today or are largely deserted by worshipers. Little wonder then that in this fair city of ours the meeting-houses of its own earlier days should have disappeared.

Their congregations have helped to build the Greater Boston. New places of worship have arisen in new neighbor-

\*The Charles Street Meeting House has, for some years, been the home of an African Methodist Episcopal congregation.

hoods. As the number of Protestant churches in Boston, and the size of their congregations, has diminished with the rapid changes in the character of the population on account of the large immigration from Europe, so the number and strength of the suburban churches outside the old city limits has correspondingly increased. The descendants of members of the older churches are now in large measure to be found in the suburbs, as what in 1860 were mere villages have grown into prosperous towns or cities. That is the story of every Protestant body in Boston, and of the Unitarian churches among the rest. With that change has come a decline of theological antagonisms. The Unitarian churches have still a mission to fulfill here in the home of its youth, but here, at least, its progress is not so much advanced by the sword of militancy as by the ploughshare of peaceful education, and the various groups of Protestant Christians in New England are coming more and more to discover that they are, and should be, not opponents but a society of friends, following as best they may in the footsteps of the "Great Friend of all the sons of men".

## THE EARLIEST NEW ENGLAND MUSIC\*

WALDO S. PRATT

*Professor of Music and Hymnology, Hartford Theological Seminary*

A few years ago, as the tercentenary of the settlement of Plymouth was approaching, some impulse led me to examine carefully the copy of the Pilgrim song-book which I had casually used for general reference for many years, but which I discovered I did not properly know. From it I culled the forgotten facts that later were worked into various addresses on the music of the Pilgrim Fathers. It has been pleasant to find that others besides myself are interested in these facts, not simply for their bearing upon our national origins, but for some strains of profound human sentiment that run through them.

It is curious how almost completely the subject has been neglected. I have found but one intelligent paper on the Plymouth Psalm-book and that is buried in the proceedings of your Massachusetts Colonial Society.\*\* All the other references are either shallow or ignorant. To be sure, two or three generations of us have read or sung those lines of Mrs. Hemans—

Not as the flying come  
In silence and in fear;  
They shook the depths of the desert's gloom  
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang  
And the stars heard, and the sea!  
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang  
With the anthem of the free.

\*Address delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Historical Society in King's Chapel Parish House, Boston, May 24, 1923.

\*\*Vol. I, pp. 228-38.



We are apt to be so responsive to Mrs. Hemans' enthusiasm about the Pilgrim's instinct for liberty that we never pause to wonder as to what were those "hymns of lofty cheer" with which her imagination decorates the scene of the settlement. When some popular lecturer discourses on colonial music he is apt to dwell on its merely quaint, or, perhaps, on what he conceives to be its ridiculous side. Yet Mrs. Hemans, like one or two other of the poets, has unconsciously seized upon something of historical reality. The first New England settlers were undoubtedly singers and the music which they sang has been preserved. And some of it still has charm and spirit and power.

Today I am asked to couple with this Pilgrim subject a similar reference to the music that was brought a little later to Boston and its vicinity. This latter topic is less certain than the former. We know the Psalm-book which the Pilgrims brought to Plymouth and kept in use there for more than seventy years. But we have no corresponding evidence about the usage among the far more numerous settlements in the Bay Colony. But the story can be built up in good part by the use of reasonable conjecture, all the steps in which I shall not attempt to indicate. I shall venture to ask you to accept the story as it has shaped itself in my mind, and to let me turn back and forth between Plymouth and Boston as if they were united earlier than was the actual fact.

For our purpose the primary point to remember is that the first migrations to New England came just at the close of one of the most eager and fertile of the periods in English popular song. From the accession of Elizabeth in 1558, the singing together of great crowds of people became a notable social phenomenon, and ballads and ditties were circulated freely in every class of society. Skilful musicians were perfecting not only the madrigal and the motet, but the more flexible part-song and glee. This English efflorescence of song was really only a part of a large movement that affected France,



the Low Countries and Germany. Everywhere it was religious as well as secular. The line between the two was indistinct. We read, for instance, of thousands of persons assembling in the long evenings behind St. Paul's in London just to amuse themselves by singing Psalms! A whole series of books was compiled to provide arrangements of the Psalm-tunes in parts, so that they could be sung like glees. All such singing, we should note, was usually quite without instruments—that is, free and spontaneous. But we must suppose that part-singing was rare among congregations generally.

As we all know, the song-impulse among English-speaking people centered at first upon versifications of the Psalms—not on hymns, as in Germany. The Psalm-book came speedily to be ranked next to the Bible in popular reverence. For our present purpose we need not go into the interesting, but intricate, subject of all the Psalters, especially on their literary side. Three or four books only are important in their bearing on the first music in New England.

There were two standard versions of the Psalms in Great Britain, both derived from the movement initiated by Thomas Sternhold in 1546 or 1547, and later carried forward under the lead of John Hopkins. One of these versions was that established in England in 1562 and generally known as the "Sternhold and Hopkins" version, which was not displaced till 1696, more than 130 years later. The other is the variant of this that was prepared for Scotland in 1564 and sometimes called the "Scottish Sternhold and Hopkins", which was set aside by the Scottish Psalter proper in 1650. These two versions differed considerably in their verbal contents, but they differed still more in the music included. Both of them may have been known and used among our first settlers, though the chances are that the influence of the Scottish book was slight and indirect. This latter book, however, was much affected by styles that appeared strongly in the third book to be specially mentioned.

The Psalm-book brought to Plymouth in 1620 and used there until 1692, after the death of the last of the original settlers (John Alden), was the version specially made by Henry Ainsworth for the use of the English refugees in Holland. It was first issued in 1612, and ran through at least four editions during the century. This book has many points of peculiar interest, but musically it is closely related to the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter, except, as we shall see, in its liberal use of French materials, with their more varied meters and their often captivating melodies.

We need to keep clear in our minds that the famous Bay Psalm Book of 1640, interesting as it is for other reasons, has no bearing on our subject, since, until the edition of 1696, it did not contain music. It sheds indirect light, however, because of its almost exclusive clinging to Common Meter as a verse-form, which implies that the tendency already strong in Sternhold and Hopkins was growing stronger, as we know was also the case in England.

I will not complicate matters by naming the other books that may possibly have had some influence in determining what and how the earliest settlers sang. Chief among these were a series of harmonized settings that appeared from time to time. These had importance in directing later usage in England, but they cannot be shown to be important in fixing American usage at the start.

I do not want to weary you with technical details, but perhaps one or two further preliminary points may be made. One relates to the probable method of singing. It was assumed at the time we are regarding that the melodies would be sung mostly in unison, with the men's voices as leaders. If additional parts were attempted, they were above or below the "tenor". The music was still printed without bars, except, perhaps, at the end of the lines. No key-signatures were used till somewhat later and various sharps required were not written, but evidently understood. The pitch adopted doubt-

less varied somewhat according to circumstances, but the written music followed a fixed custom, the same tune being always given at the same pitch. I do not suppose that the words were "lined out", as was usual a half-century or more later. Singers either had books or sang from memory.

Another remark lies mostly in the realm of conjecture. How much were the people who first came to our shores actually singers? As to the Plymouth company, we have Winslow's explicit testimony that in the Leyden congregation the singing was skilful and fine. I know of no parallel testimony as to the settlers around Boston. It is inconceivable, however, that among the hundreds who presently populated the Bay Colony there were not many who shared in the English musical zest of the time. At both Plymouth and Boston, we may be sure, the Psalm-singing on Sundays was a cherished function, the one form of fixed liturgy that came over intact from across the sea. We are told that for a long period men took off their hats whenever they heard some one singing one of the Psalm-tunes, even outside of the church. I assume, then, that the sudden decline in the extent and quality of the music that undoubtedly set in during the seventeenth century was due almost wholly to the absence of general musical life among those who were struggling for existence as pioneer homesteaders. But part of it, no doubt, came from the ultra-Puritan repression that came presently to be the dominating social note in the Bay Colony. This outran the measure of the Puritan iconoclasm in England, which has been falsely charged with extreme antipathy to music.

If we assume that the standard sources of the first New England usage were the English Sternhold and Hopkins and the *Psalter* of the "heretic" Ainsworth, we find that the former provided forty-two tunes for the Psalms proper (besides almost twenty more for various formulæ, like the Lord's Prayer, the Magnificat, etc.) and the latter thirty-nine tunes for Psalms only. The exact total is hard to estimate. About

twenty tunes were common to the two books, but just how certain of the appended melodies in Sternhold and Hopkins are to be reckoned is uncertain. I assume that a total number of seventy-five to eighty is about all that is possible. Actual usage may have reduced this considerably.

The question of where these melodies came from might be discussed at much length. In general, their personal authorship is impossible to trace. In this, as in their essential character, they are true folk-songs. The two main sources are English and French. Back of the whole development of congregational singing in western Europe from about 1550 lay the successive Psalters of Geneva. But English Protestants grafted on at once songs of their own, and ultimately, in both England and America, the English tunes drove out the French with but two or three exceptions. The Scottish church held on longer to meters and tunes from Geneva, but these too succumbed about the time when the Scottish Psalter of 1650 was issued.

After one has worked over the details awhile he comes to have a certain instinct that some of the material is probably English and some probably French, though he may not be able always to give reasons for the faith that is in him. The verse in all but a few cases is iambic—never trochaic, as began to be increasingly characteristic of English hymnody only after Charles Wesley smote his Methodist lyre about 1740. But the English taste was for what came to be called "Common Meter"—the most used of the old "ballad-meters"—while the French had an analogous taste for some form of "10s", probably because many of their popular songs tended to that longer and rather more plastic type.\* The English

\*Common Meter is still abundant in all hymn-books but in dwindling proportions. Its fluent form is illustrated by Addison's familiar stanza—

When all Thy mercies, O my God,  
My rising soul surveys,  
Transported with the view I'm lost  
In wonder, love, and praise.

The supremacy in English hymnody of Common Meter and its relatives was first challenged about the middle of the eighteenth century, when several trochaic meters became popular. These were assiduously cultivated during the nineteenth century, while some iambic types also appeared that are but distantly related to Common Meter. Among these latter one of the richest is that known as "10s",

tunes early betrayed a tendency to slip into series of tones of equal length, though almost always with a longer tone at the beginning and end of each line. The French tunes, on the other hand, abound in piquant note-patterns, with long and short tones intermingled (somewhat as in our modern part-song tunes), and sometimes with "snap" effects and other peculiarities that seem puzzling today. Two of the favorite tunes (both English) are in triple rhythm, and occasionally variants of other tunes appear in that rhythm, including even what we call "Old Hundredth" (see Ps. 24 below). We have got so used to measured uniformity and even monotonous stupidity in what we are pleased to call "the old tunes" that we almost want to quarrel with the historic facts. Only the other day I noted the lament of one of our intelligent organists over what he felt to be the secular irregularity of some modern tune as compared with the churchly monotony of the old days. Yet in Ainsworth's *Psalter* there is not a single tune written in the style that he had in mind. And even the majority of what he termed "the stately German chorales" were originally far more varied in movement than after they emerged from under the editorial steam-roller in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The chances are that when one tries to cite a specimen tune of the Puritan period he will pitch on "York" or "Dundee" as these are now usually printed. That is, he thinks of a four-line Common Meter form with twenty-eight syllables and notes to the stanza. This type undoubtedly did become common during the seventeenth century, being what was then called a "short tune" or "half-tune". In both Sternhold and Hopkins and Ainsworth such tunes are very rare. The standard patterns in these books had six or eight lines, as in all the older German chorales, running from forty to eighty or

an early example being the touching prayer with which Lyte closed his ministry—

Abide with me! fast falls the eventide;  
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O abide with me!



even more syllables and tones to the stanza. (See Pss. 24, 39, 84 and 119 below.) The shift from the ample stanza to the short one was plainly due to a demand for something plain and easy. Musically, it was a great loss, as the newer and curter melodies had little of the character and sweep of their predecessors. It is interesting to observe with what a sure instinct the hymn- and tune-writers of the last half-century have returned to the long stanza.

At this point reference should be made to one feature in these old books that seems strange to us. I mean their preference for the minor mode over the major. In Ainsworth almost exactly three-quarters of the tunes are minor, and in Sternhold and Hopkins the proportion is nearly as large. So far as technical facility goes, one is handled as well as the other, but it is evident that the minor is the favorite, or at least the more usual. This reminds us, of course, that these songs arose just at the time when the modern feeling for the major was disentangling itself from the medieval feeling, or rather, when the instinct for the major which had long been manifest in secular music began to make its way into the domain of sacred music. To us today the major has become so nearly universal in tunes that we almost resent anything else. We are wont to think that a minor melody must be doleful, if not grotesque. Yet every musician knows that minors are not necessarily either of these. Everything depends upon matters of rhythm, pattern and figure. Even a minor tune may be full of spirit, and even of sparkle. Indeed, I have been interested to note how often the psalms of jubilation and faith were set to minor melodies, as if these were felt to express their intrinsic sentiment better. (See Pss. 3 and 97, 5 and 15 below.)

The form in which these melodies are put implies a sense of harmonic structure essentially as we have it today. Not only is it possible to fit modern harmony to them, but they demand it. How they were treated by musicians of the time

we know from the several harmonized versions that were made. These latter present few points that are in the least unnatural to us. They do not go quite as far as we do in the use of inverted chords, and so have usually a much more angular bass than is usual now, and, of course, they are much more wary about all chromatic steps. But the harmonic framework is quite like ours in its full sense of key or tonality, in the general doctrine of chord-formation and connection, and in the definition of lines or phrases by means of cadences. The modulations, too, are just those to be found in a modern hymnal. We are in the dark, however, about how much harmonized singing was actually practiced in Protestant churches. We may be sure that congregations did not have tunes printed in parts. But they may have sung in parts nevertheless. We today cannot quite understand that there ever was a time when men sang freely in extemporized harmony, or when a harmony heard once or twice might be caught up and re-echoed faithfully by a crowd. And yet that was just what was sometimes done in secular music in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At all events, these Psalm-tunes, like the melodies of the German chorales, are implicit of harmony at every point.

I shall not attempt to make more than a few hasty remarks about the words that go with these melodies. The theory underlying them was that the entire Book of Psalms must be made available for singing, it being assumed to be a divinely-appointed manual of praise; and that its text was to be versified as literally as possible. The Sternhold and Hopkins version was made on the basis of the so-called "Great Bible" of 1539 or of the Genevan version of 1560, though with much diversity in method and style, since the drafting of the verses extended over more than fifteen years and was done by many different versifiers, a few of whom may have been influenced by their knowledge of the original Hebrew. The process in the case of the Ainsworth *Psalter* was very different. Henry



Ainsworth was known as one of the leading Hebrew scholars of the time. When he set about making his *Psalter*, he first prepared a wholly new prose translation from the original text, accompanied by annotations that still have interest for their acumen and pith. From this fresh version he then made his versification. His *Psalter*, therefore, has an originality and unity quite absent from the other. But Ainsworth's mind had the peculiarities of genius. Several features of his work are more curious than admirable, perhaps, and it is quite certain that some of his typographical devices are perplexing to the casual reader today—as is shown in the mistaken comments that they have provoked.

The whole story of the English metrical Psalters from Sternhold's initial experiment in 1546-1547 down to the revolution of method under Isaac Watts in the early eighteenth century is, I think, more important and significant than is commonly thought. Years ago, when I first plunged into its intricacies as a part of the general history of English hymnody, I shared the common impression that it was a mixture of oddity and barrenness. But I came speedily to see that it was not only a monument of a strenuous and earnest age, but also a literary monument as well, like the Prayer Book. I do not mean to imply that every versified *Psalter* has the richness and dignity of the completed Prayer Book. But there is hardly any one of them that does not yield passages that are well worth quoting for their dignity and balance of expression.

The point for us to bear in mind today is that when our fathers sang from either of their Psalm-books they were using what was to them not doggerel or mere verbal hack-work, but the sincere effort of scholars and divines to render into verse what they conceived to be the very spirit of the Psalms. And there is no doubt that for the common people a far greater influence resided in the versified text than in the prose text.

This influence was intensified by the association of the verses with the melodies that went with them.

I hope that I have not dwelt too long on these somewhat technical points. My reason is obvious. I am asked to speak on the music that can be connected with the earliest New England settlements. Just what that was can be appreciated only with some deliberate mental effort, particularly in view of the prevalent popular misconceptions or misrepresentations of it. Let us try to put ourselves back into the time and the atmosphere to which these tunes belong—a time when God was near and real, when faith in his love and loyalty to his will were as mainsprings in character and conduct, when religion had the passionate and tenacious quality that sets it above all other interests and when its expression in act and word was intense and eager. We may be very sure that the Sunday service of the fathers was not like many that we can find today. It was both a compelling duty and a supreme privilege. Through it the worshiper came sacramentally into fellowship with things divine and eternal, not only by means of the expounding of the Scriptures in the long sermon, but in the extended prayers and the equally extended psalmody. It is likely that these latter exercises of self-expression occupied more time than those of impression and exhortation. For the time being men felt themselves limited in praise to the paths of sentiment found in the Book of Psalms. But we may be sure that those paths carried them far into the mysteries of the worshiping experience. Intellectually their praise was probably less elaborate in sweep than that of our modern hymnody, and far less precise in its articulation and less finished in its texture. But one wonders whether its emotional, and therefore its spiritual, content may not have been as rich as that which most of our modern congregations seem to find. For the spirit of praise was surely there—the spirit which seeks to realize in the act of song something of the essential passion of the soul after God, and, through the

vocal utterance of that passion, to find itself lifted into a new and life-giving consciousness of communion with His very presence.

When the foregoing paper was given it was followed by the singing of a considerable number of the old melodies with piano accompaniment. Some examples of these, taken from the writer's brochure on "The Music of the Pilgrims" (1921), are here appended, the plates being courteously lent for the purpose by The Oliver Ditson Company. These specimens illustrate several points made in the paper. It should be noted, however, that only the melodies are original; the harmonies supplied are modern.

Page 26 shows how, in Ainsworth's *Psalter*, the music was combined with both a prose and a versified version, besides some annotations on the text.

Psalms 3 and 97 (both 10s), page 70, offer a striking contrast between minor and major as adjusted to somewhat similar line-patterns that have no little positive vivacity.

Psalms 24 (C.M.D.), page 71, is one of the few cases where triple rhythm is employed throughout. Every other line, also, has a curious "snap" effect.

Psalms 5 and 15 (both 10s), page 72, supply another case of a contrast in somewhat parallel forms between major and minor. In both, the line-patterns vary for each line, besides shifting to and fro somewhat between duple and triple rhythm.

Psalms 39 (C.M.D.), page 75, is a remarkably spirited treatment of Common Meter in its double or eight-line form.

Psalms 84 (L.P.M.D.), page 79, is the traditional battle-song of the Huguenots, though when thus sung was set to Psalm 36 or (more often) to Psalm 68. This melody has a singularly stirring effect when sung with vigor by men's voices.

Psalm 119 (10s, D.), page 80, is one of the longest of the series—eighty notes to the stanza. Properly sung, it is often counted the noblest of all. But, in the old days, if the entire 119th Psalm was sung at once, the rendering would have stretched to at least an hour and a quarter!

It may be added that in the writer's opinion effective modern hymns to be used with these melodies are such as the following:—

- Psalm 3. God of our fathers, whose almighty hand.  
Psalm 97. Rise, crowned with light, imperial Salem, rise.  
Psalm 24. Let saints on earth in concert sing.  
Psalm 5. New every morning is the love.  
Psalm 15. O still in accents sweet and strong.  
Psalm 39. Thy kingdom come! on bended knee.  
Psalm 84. I'll praise my Maker with my breath.\*  
Psalm 119. Spirit of God, descend upon my heart,

OR

Break Thou the bread of life, dear Lord to me.

\*The meter of Psalm 84 is almost unknown in modern hymnals.

The page numbering of these plates which follow is that of "The Music of the Pilgrims", rather than of the present publication.

1. To the mayster of the musick upon Gittith; a Psalm of David.

2. Iehovah our Lord, how wondrous-excellent is thy name in all the earth: which hast given thy glorious-majestie, above the heavens.

3. Out-of the mouth of babes, & sucklings, thou hast founded strength; because of thy-distressers: to make cease the enemy, & self-avenger.

4. When I behold thy heavens, the deed of thy fingers: the moon and the starrs, which thou hast stably-constituted.

5. What is sory-man that thou remembrest him: and the son of Adam, that thou-visitest him?

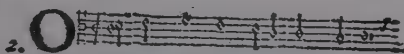
6. For thou hast made him-lesser a litle, than the Gods: and crowned him with glory and comely-honour.

7. Thou gavest him-dominion, over the works of thy hands: all, thou-didst-sett under his feet.

8. Sheep and oxen al of them: and also, the beasts of the feild.

9. The fowl of the heavens, & the fishes of the sea: that-which-passeth-through, the pathes of the seas.

10. Iehovah our Lord: how wondrous-excellent is thy name, in all the earth.

2. O 

*Iah our Lord, how excellent-great is*

*thy name in all the earth: thou which hast given*

*thy glorious-majestie above the heauen.*

3. Fro mouth of babes, & sucklings, thou firmer

*foundedst; because of them that thee distress:*

*To make the foe, and self-avenger cease:*

4. When I behold thy heav'ns, thy fingers deed: the moon and starrs, which thou hast stablished.

5. What is frail-man that him thou remembrest? and Adams son, that him thou visitest?

6. For thou a litle lesser hast made him, than be the Gods: and crown'd him with glorie and-cke with honourable-decencie.

7. Of thy hand-works, thou gavest him ruling: under his feet, thou set didst every-thing.

8. Sheep & beeves all: and fild beasts, with the fowl of the heav'ns, fish of the sea also: (same, that through the path-ways of the seas dooth go,

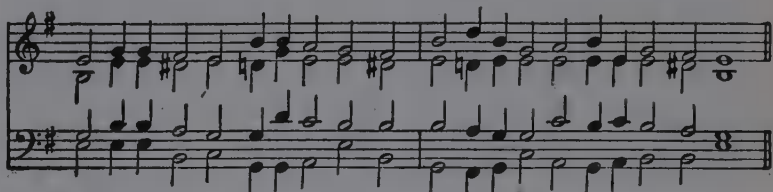
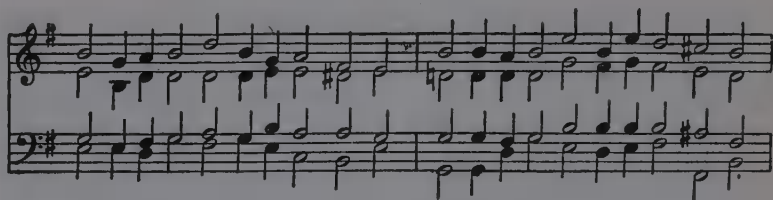
10. O Iah our Lord: how excellent-great-fame in all the earth hath thy renowned-name.

### Annotations.

**P. 1.** Gittith] of the Gittith: which title is also given to the 81. & 84. Psalms. Gath sit Debye is a vinepress, Isa. 63. 2. It is also the name of a city of the Philistines, 1 Sam. 17. 4. A citie also of the Levites was called Gath-rimmon Jos. 21. 25. whereupon Obed-edom the son of Jeduthun, a Levite and singer of Israel, was called a Gittite. 2. Sam. 6. 10. So by Gittith here may be meant, either such instruments as were used by the posterity of Obed-edom the Gittite; or, that these Psalms were made upon occasion of transporting Gods ark from the house of that Obed-edom, the history whereof is in 2 Sam. 6. 6. 10. 11. 12. &c. or, that these Psalms were to be sung for praise of God, at the Vintage, when grapes were pressed. And according to this, the Greek translateth it the winepresses. Or it may be the name of some musical instrument; and so the Chaldee paraphrast taketh it.

**P. 2.** our Lord] our susteyners: see the note on Pal. 2. 4. wondrous-excellent] of god

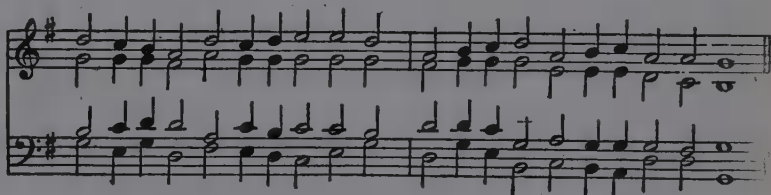
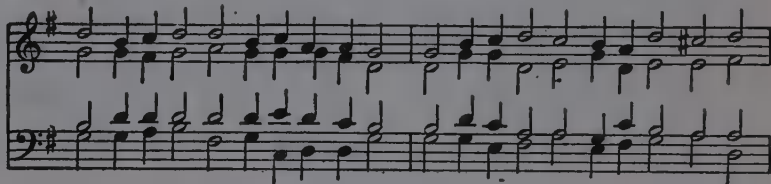
PSALMS 3. 108.



I layd me down and slept; I waking rose;  
For me Jehovah firmly up did bear.  
For thousands ten of folk I wil not fear,  
Which me besetting round about inclose.

[ Ps. 3 ]

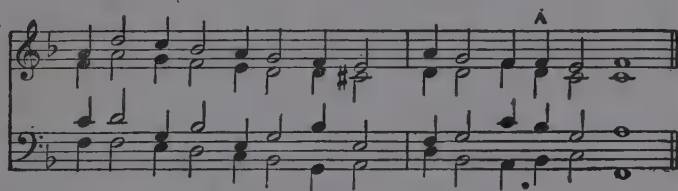
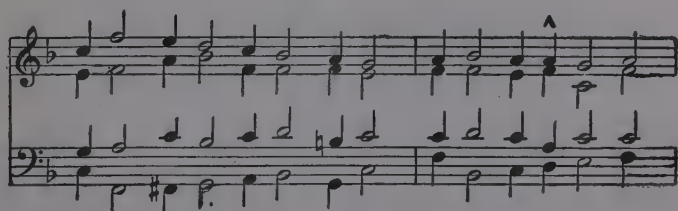
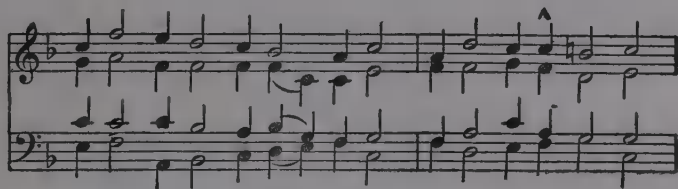
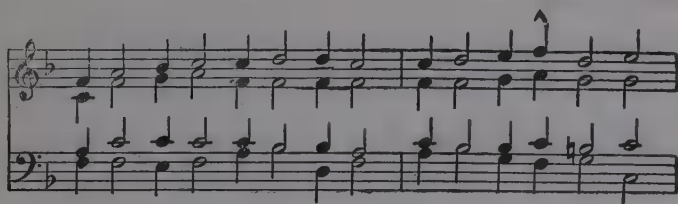
PSALM 97 108.



O praise Him with sound of the trumpet shril;  
Praise Him with harp and the psalterion;  
O praise Him with the flute and tymberel;  
Praise Him with virginals and organon!

[ Ps. 150 ]

PSALM 24. C. M. D.

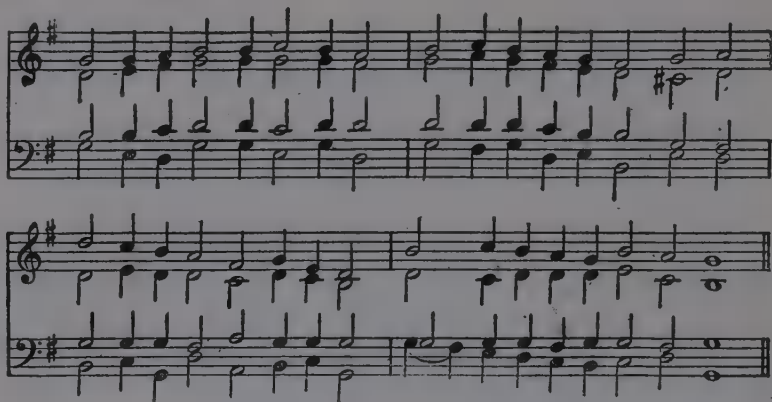


Lift up, ye gates, your heads, and ye,  
 Doors of eternal aye,  
 Be lifted up, that so the King  
 Of glory enter may!  
 This King of glory, who is He?  
 Jehovah, puissant  
 And valiant, Jehovah, He  
 In battel valiant.

[ Ps. 24 ]



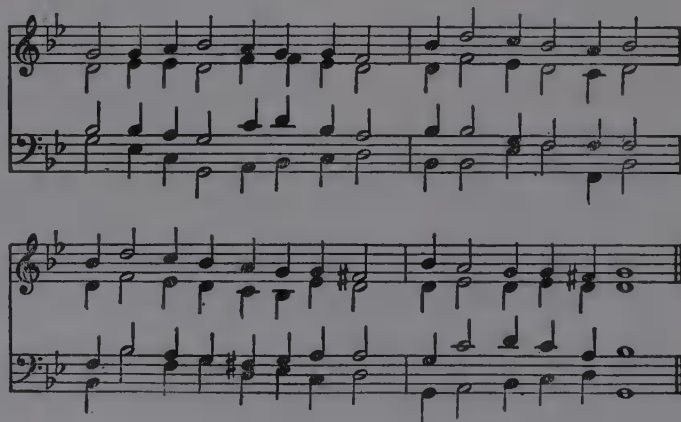
PSALM 5. L. M.



And all that hope in Thee for stay  
Shal joy, shal showt eternallie;  
And Thou shal cover them; and they  
That love T y name, be glad in Thee.

[ Ps. 5 ]

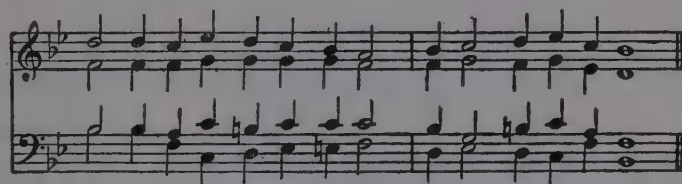
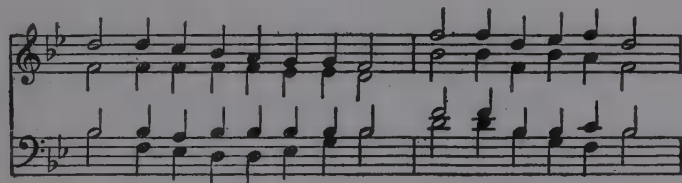
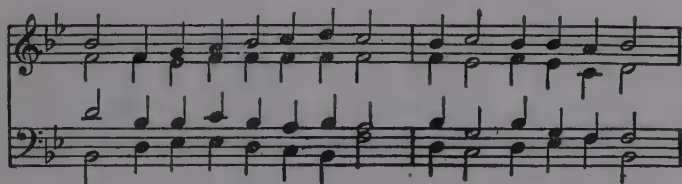
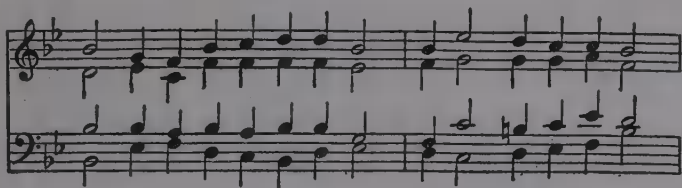
PSALM 15. C. M.



Jehovah, who shal sojourner  
In Thy pavilion bee?  
Who shal a dweller be within  
Thy mount of sanctitie?

[ Ps. 15 ]

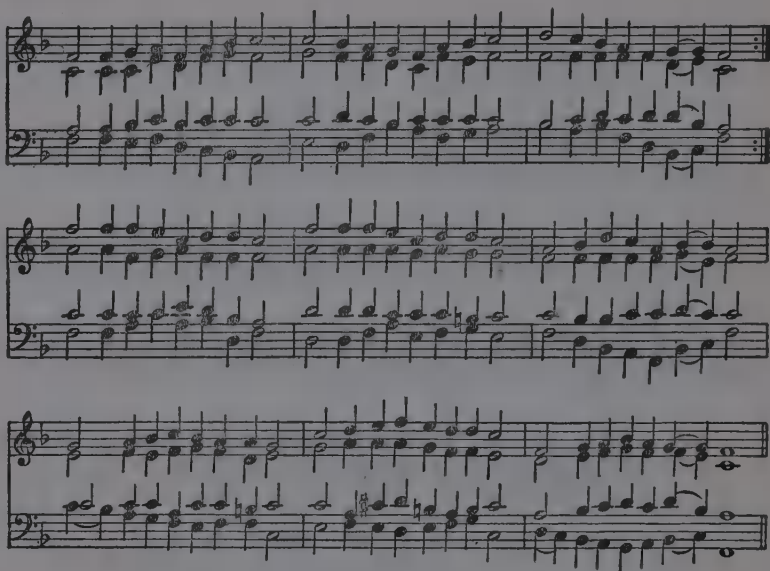
PSALM 39. C. M. D.



Fyre in my meditation burnd;  
 I with my tongue did speak.  
 Jehovah, make me know mine end,  
 What my dayes' mesure eke;  
 Know let me how short liv'd I am.  
 Loe, Thou hast giv'n my dayes  
 As handbredths, and my worldly time  
 Fore Thee as nothing weighes.

[ Ps. 39 ]

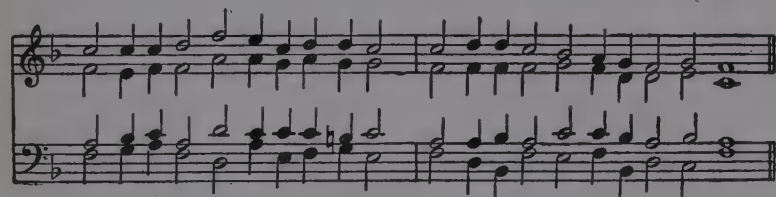
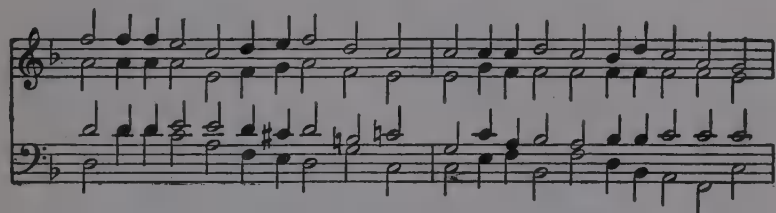
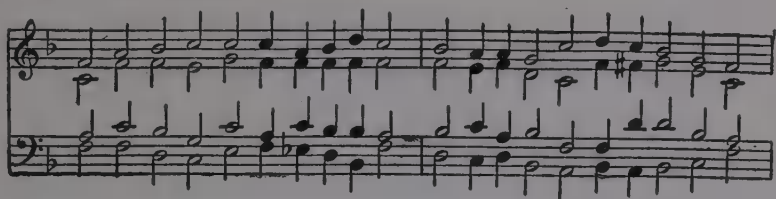
PSALM 84. L. P. M. D.



Confess Jehovah thankfully,  
 For He is good, for His mercy  
 Continueth for ever.  
 To God of gods confess doo yee,  
 Because His bountiful-mercee  
 Continueth for ever.  
 Unto the Lord of lords confess,  
 Because His merciful kindnes  
 Continueth for ever.  
 To Him that dooth Himself onely  
 Things wondrous great, for His mercy  
 Continueth for ever.

[ Ps. 136 ]

PSALM 119. IOS, D.



Behind and 'fore Thou doost me strayt inclose;  
Upon me also doost Thy hand impose.

This knowledge is too marvellous for me;

It's high, to reach I shal not able be.

O whither shal I from Thy spirit goe?

And whither shal I flee Thy presence fro?

If I clime up the heav'ns, Thou art there;

Or make my bed in hel, loe, Thou art there.

[ Ps. 119 ]



## RECORDS OF THE ANNUAL MEETING, 1926

The twenty-sixth annual meeting of the Unitarian Historical Society was held in the Edward Everett Hale Chapel, First Church, on Thursday morning, May 27, 1926, at eleven o'clock, the President, Rev. Henry Wilder Foote, presiding.

The record of the last meeting was read and approved.

The report of the Librarian was read and accepted.

The report of the Treasurer, showing a balance on hand of \$173.42, was read, accepted, and placed on file.

The President appealed for a larger membership of the Society, and spoke of the new publication of the Society, Volume I, Part 1, containing the address of Professor W. W. Fenn, at the Annual Meeting of 1925, and that of Dr. Kenneth B. Murdock, at the Annual Meeting of 1924. He explained that members were entitled to copies; and that the issue is on sale at one dollar.

The Nominating Committee having reported, the following persons were elected officers of the Society for the ensuing year:

Rev. Henry Wilder Foote, *President*

Rev. Charles E. Park, *Vice-President*

Hon. Winslow Warren, *Honorary Vice-President*

Julius H. Tuttle, *Secretary and Librarian*

Frederick W. Stuart, Jr., *Treasurer*

### DIRECTORS

Edwin J. Lewis, Jr.

Miss Harriet E. Johnson

Rev. George Hale Reed

Rev. Charles Graves

Rev. William Safford Jones, of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, spoke of the importance of a suitable memorial to be erected over the grave of Socinus in Poland, and it was

*Voted:* That this society endorse the plan sponsored by Rev. Charles W. Wendte, D.D., and President Earl M. Wilbur, D.D., to erect a simple monument over the now neglected grave of Faustus Socinus at Luclawice, Poland, and that the officers of the Society be hereby authorized to use the name of this Society in commending the plan to the Unitarian Churches in this country.

Rev. Christopher R. Eliot called attention to the coming anniversary of Rev. Joseph Tuckerman.

On motion of Mr. William O. Comstock, of Brookline, it was voted that the question of raising the membership dues from one dollar to two dollars be referred to the Directors.

The President then introduced Mr. Edwin J. Lewis, Jr., who gave a delightful and instructive address on "The Churches of Boston in 1860" illustrated with lantern slides, which was warmly appreciated.

JULIUS H. TUTTLE,  
*Secretary.*



## RECORDS OF THE ANNUAL MEETING, 1927

The twenty-seventh Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Historical Society was held in King's Chapel on Thursday morning, May 26, 1927, at eleven o'clock, the President, Rev. Henry Wilder Foote, presiding.

The record of the last Annual Meeting was read and approved.

The report of the Librarian was read and accepted.

The report of the Treasurer was read and accepted.

The President spoke of the Society's plan to continue the publication of *Proceedings*, and of the importance of having a large membership to continue the work and enlarge the interests of the Society. He also called attention to the plans for the proposed Socinus Memorial.

Mr. Edwin J. Lewis read an appeal to raise the modest sum of \$3,000 for the erection of a room adjoining the ancient chapel of Toxteth, Liverpool, England, and its equipment, as a memorial to Richard Mather, minister there, and later minister of the First Church in Dorchester, Massachusetts.

The President reported that the Directors in behalf of the Society had accepted the generous offer of Dr. Charles W. Wendte, of Berkeley, California, to give the sum of ten thousand dollars to the American Unitarian Association, the income of the same, after the death of Dr. Wendte and his wife, to be divided between the Religious Arts Guild and the Unitarian Historical Society, together with a collection of his books to be divided between the same societies.

The proposed amendments to the Constitution were then read by the Secretary and adopted as follows:

Instead of Article II, the amended form shall be:

*Article II.* This Society shall be composed of all persons interested in its purpose who have paid the annual dues of two dollars.

Article V, in the amended form shall read:

*Article V.* The officers of the Society shall be a President, a Vice-President, not more than two Honorary Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Librarian, these officers to be chosen annually, and six additional Directors, two of whom shall be elected each year for a term of three years, and who together with the officers shall constitute the Board of Directors. Vacancies which may occur in the Board of Directors may be filled by the Board for the unexpired term.

Article VII, in the amended form shall read:

*Article VII.* The President shall annually appoint standing committees of the Society on 1. Membership, 2. Library, 3. Preservation of Records and 4. Publication; and committees for such other purposes as may be deemed expedient for administering the affairs of the Society or for advancing its interests.

The Nominating Committee appointed by the President, having reported, the following persons were elected officers of the Society for the ensuing year:

Rev. Henry Wilder Foote, *President*  
Rev. Charles E. Park, *Vice-President*  
Hon. Winslow Warren, *Honorary Vice-President*  
Pres. Earl M. Wilbur, *Honorary Vice-President*  
Julius H. Tuttle, Esq., *Secretary*  
Frederick W. Stuart, Jr., Esq., *Treasurer*  
Miss Cynthia Griffin, *Librarian*

## DIRECTORS

### *For one year*

Rev. Louis C. Cornish, D.D.

Prof. Francis A. Christie, D.D.

### *For two years*

Edwin J. Lewis, Jr., Esq.

Miss Harriet E. Johnson

### *For three years*

Rev. Charles Graves

Mrs. Mary Fifield King

The President then introduced Rev. Professor William W. Fenn, D.D., who gave an able and appreciative address on "Dr. Sylvester Judd, Unitarian Churchman in Maine".

JULIUS H. TUTTLE,  
*Secretary.*

[Since the Annual Meeting the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr. Stuart as Treasurer has been filled, on October 14, in accordance with the amended By-Laws, by the election of Mr. Harrie H. Dadmun, to serve until the next Annual Meeting.]

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